



THE REVIVAL
OF WONDER



Malcolm J. McLeod



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The revival of wonder, and
other addresses

With love—
To my dear friend
Nettie Hall—
with deep appreciation of
her comradeship in books—
and many other lovely things—
Mary T. White—

May 5th 1923

THE REVIVAL OF WONDER

By
Malcolm James McLeod, D. D.

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The Revival of Wonder

And Other Addresses

By

MALCOLM JAMES MCLEOD

*Minister of Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas
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Christian Ideals," "Earthly Discords and
How to Mend Them," etc.*



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Contents

I.	THE REVIVAL OF WONDER	9
II.	THE FUNERAL OF GOD	17
III.	TEN TIMES ONE ARE ELEVEN	28
IV.	MILLIONAIRES	. . . . .	42
V.	SAINTS IN SODOM	. . . . .	52
VI.	CONQUERING THREE WORLDS	. . . . .	60
VII.	RAINBOWS IN THE MORNING	. . . . .	72
VIII.	RAINBOWS AT NIGHT	. . . . .	80
IX.	THE DEVIL OF FEAR	. . . . .	91
X.	THE RELIGION THAT EVERYBODY BELIEVES	. . . . .	102
XI.	AT THE SHRINE OF BEAUTY	. . . . .	119
XII.	IS OUR FAMILY LIFE A FAILURE?	. . . . .	133
XIII.	PREPAREDNESS	. . . . .	143
XIV.	SPLITTING HAIRS	158
XV.	BECAUSE I LOVE AMERICA	169
XVI.	THE SKYSCRAPER AND THE HOME	179



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I

THE REVIVAL OF WONDER



FOUR or five years ago there passed away in England a man who was not popularly known, but a man of very great brilliancy in the firmament of letters. He was a poet—a critic and a romanticist. His name was Watts-Dunton. He was also quite a good deal of an artist. His sonnets attracted the attention of Rossetti, with whom he subsequently studied art in Italy. He was a great friend of the poet Swinburne. He wrote a number of books and the last book he published had an interesting title. He called it “The Renaissance of Wonder.” He claimed that one of the most hopeful features of our time is that the sense of wonder is reviving. The motto of thirty years ago was “Never wonder.” Oscar Wilde told us that there was nothing worth seeing in Switzerland and that he considered the Atlantic tame. It was the “Nil admirari” theory of Horace. But this spirit, says Mr. Watts-Dunton, is disappearing. Men are awakening more and more to the wonder of things. Perhaps the most wonderful thing in life is that we do not wonder more.

One of the certain signs of growing old is that gradually "shades of the prison house close around us" until at length the divine spark "dies away and fades into the light of common day." To become blasé and vapid and insipid; to be unmoved and unswept and unthrilled by the marks of the marvellous; to allow familiarity to breed not contempt exactly but indifference, is one of the surest signs that youth is leaving us. For one of the charms of childhood is that the child is a wonderer. "All things are big with wonder for the bairn," the beating of the rain on the window-pane, the crash of the thunder, the flash of the lightning, the whistle of the engine. How delightful to watch the little fellow at the circus. Not infrequently he is the best part of the show. And how beautiful to see the old man who has held on to this fresh relish of his childhood, and to whom the world with all its marvellous sights is just as exciting to-day as when he was a boy. It is what we call the child heart and the sad fact is that so many of us let it pine away and die.

"My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old."

For after every learned pantologist has had his say this is a wonderful world. Its beginning is wonderful, its history is wonderful, its finale

is wonderful. The creatures living on it are wonderful. Its mountains and rivers and trees and flowers are wonderful. Its age is wonderful. It is all wonderful, amazingly, bewitchingly wonderful. Professor Robinson, of Columbia, in his "Lectures on History" last winter told us of paleolithic implements recently discovered, which he reckons were made 150,000 years ago, but this is a mere drop in the demijohn compared with the age of these Manhattan rocks. The astronomer argues that the world is a hundred million years old; the geologist says five hundred million. Professor Hale, of the Mount Wilson Observatory, California, has just written a book which he calls "The New Heavens." He has a chapter in it called "The Giant Stars." Speaking of that new colossus of the skies, Betelgeuse, whose diameter is 215,000,000 miles, one is fairly stunned into silence. It could swallow up, says Dr. Hale, "more than 20,000,000 of our suns." The nearest fixed star is 25,000,000,000 miles away; the farthest is so remote that it takes 50,000 years for its light to reach us. These are staggering stretches.

And this is only half the mystery. For the minute is as amazing as the immeasurable. While Michelson finds his romance in the stars, Sir Oliver Lodge finds his in the test tube. To him the really exciting things are found in the laboratory. Immanuel Kant said there were two

things that filled him with awe, the moral law within and the starry heavens above. But if the great German were living to-day would he not add a third to his twosome, the infinitesimal world around him. Because there are three things that ought to fill every reverent man with awe, if he has a faded tattered rag of reverence left—the sky and the soul and the sod.

Some one has observed that if all the stars were to cease shining to-night and not shine again for a whole year, and then suddenly were to burst out again in all their twinkling glory, there is not an eye that would not be lifted heavenward. Everybody would be purchasing telescopes. That seems to touch the nerve of the matter. It is not knowledge that is the enemy of wonder; it is familiarity. Robert Hichens in one of his stories tells of an artist who was painting a picture of the ocean. He was trying to express the restless wonder of it. So he went down to the beach and rented a room for a few months in order to drink in the message of the mighty deep. Then in order to bring out his idea forcibly he thought it would help if he could find a child in whose eyes the great salt waves reflected surprise. He searched through all the village for one, but in vain. All the little barefooted tots he met were so familiar with the water that the sight was tame to them. At last he came back to an inland town, and one

day he ran across a little fellow with a bright, intelligent look, who had never been to the shore. So he purchased a ticket and took him down, just to watch his face when the great sweep of water first burst upon his view. It happened that a storm was raging at the time, and the look of awe on the lad's face was just what the artist wanted. It was lit up with the glint and the glory of the infinite. He had found his model. It is not knowledge but familiarity that is the enemy of wonder.

Bishop Coxe in his hymn sings, "We are living, we are dwelling in a grand and awful time." And as some one adds, "Every day seems to get grander and awfuller." How many impossible things are happening! Horace Greeley would have laughed if you had suggested to him to get his news for the *Tribune* by wireless. If you had told Napoleon what a big Bertha gun is capable of doing he would have looked at you with that familiar far-away stare of his. For a gun to throw a shell five and seventy miles seems to be verging on the ludicrous. It reminds one of the story of the man who went to the zoological gardens and when he saw the rhinoceros, after looking at it a long time, he turned away, saying, "There ain't no such beast." Our President's picture was recently transmitted by wireless from New York to Paris. A few months ago our battleship *Iowa* steamed out of Chesapeake Bay

with not a living soul on board. Her throbbing engines, her mighty rudder, and even the fires under her boilers were controlled by radio. The man operating her valves and pulling her levers was miles away on shore. It seems uncanny. She must have looked like the mythical ghost ship of the old Arthurian legend. Truly indeed “we *are* living in a grand and awful time.”

One strange thing about our Lord is that He so rarely manifested any wonder. We are not told that the starry heavens ever called forth any burst from Him of admiration or emotion. Nothing is said of any natural phenomena ever having moved Him to rapture or delight. Even on the Mount of Transfiguration it was the disciples, not He, who were dazzled with the glory. I think there are but two occasions in which the Master ever expressed any surprise. We are told of many times in which He awakened surprise in others, but I can recall only two instances in which He is expressly said to have manifested the feeling Himself. Once when He was rejected by His own people who would have nothing at all to do with Him, we are told that “He marvelled at their unbelief.” And once when an utter stranger, a Roman officer, sent messengers to Him on behalf of his servant who was ill; “Do not trouble to come to me in person,” the man implored, “I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the

word only and my servant shall be healed.” Which when Jesus heard He marvelled, so the record informs us, and said, “I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel.” So it would seem that the real wonder to Jesus was the wonder of the human soul.

“He marvelled at their unbelief.” How often He must marvel at ours! How often we get fearful and lose our sense of trust! When the storm sweeps down upon us how quickly we lose our nerve and get into a panic! We worry over food and raiment and all the other things, while all the time He is saying to us, “What meaneth all this fear? Behold the fowls of the air.” And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies how they manage to get along. So many people are always borrowing trouble as if they did not have a good deal more than enough of their own. “The troubles that trouble me most,” says the old Persian proverb, “are the troubles I never had.” There are people who are dead set against borrowing in any shape or form but they do not hesitate to borrow trouble. I have known men who are so dead opposed to the whole borrowing business that they would not ask you to lend them an umbrella in a down-pour, but they will load themselves down with tons and millstones of trouble. I like that story of the man who was fussing over his work. Some one said to him one day, “Say, my good friend,

who took care of the world before you came into it?" "God, sir," was the answer. "And can't you trust Him to take care of it when you leave it?"

In the case of the centurion, however, it was not the man's unbelief but his belief that called forth the Master's eulogy. He did not expect it. It was like finding a treasure in the attic. It was like stumbling across a flower in the desert. The man had had no spiritual opportunities. He was just a heathen soldier. No seed had ever been scattered in that soil. And the Master is so pleased and filled with wonder that He says, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

"Waken, O world, if ye would glimpse the wonder
Of God's great primal plan!
Open, O ears, if ye would hear the thunder
Hurled from the heights to man!

"The only death is death in man's perception;
The only grave is grave of blinded eyes;
Creation's marvel mocks at man's deception—
It is man's mind that from its tomb must rise!

"How long shall Christ's high message be rejected?
Two thousand years have passed since it was told.
Must One again be born and resurrected,
Ere man shall grasp the secret, ages old?

"What then, the miracle of Easter day?
What meant the riven tomb, the hidden Might
That conquered Death and rolled the stone away
And brought the Master back to mortal sight?

"This, that throughout the worlds, one life unbroken,
Rushes and flames in an eternal vow.
Death cannot be, and never has been spoken,
God and immortal life are *here and now.*"

II

THE FUNERAL OF GOD



HOMAS HARDY has a poem entitled "The Funeral of God," which contains the following stanzas. There are many to-day to whom they make a strong, convincing appeal. God to them has ceased to be a living reality. He has largely faded out of their lives. "He can no longer be kept alive."

"I saw a slowly stepping train
Lined on the brows, scoop-eyed and bent and hoar,
Following in files across a twilit plain;
A strange and mystic form the foremost bore.

* * * * *

"O man-projected figure, of late
Imaged as we, thy knell who shall survive?
Whence came it we were tempted to create
One whom we can no longer keep alive?

* * * * *

"How sweet it was in years far hied
To start the wheels of day with trustful prayer!
To lie down liegely at the eventide
And feel a blest assurance He was there."

We have not forgotten the Frenchman who was ready to escort Him to the verge of the cosmos, thank Him for His good graces and politely bow Him out. These critics, of course, do not believe in the future life any more; they do not confess

to a belief in a resurrection of any kind. When a man is dead he's dead—dead as the mummy of Rameses. Celestial matters and other-world hopes do not interest them in the least. It's all apocryphal stuff. They deny any spiritual meaning whatever to human life. They are the advanced school, the rationalists, the modern thought thinkers of our day. They are downright materialists pure and simple.

Certainly the world is having its own share of troubles just now. Their name is legion. And the causes put forward are legion too; some holding that the root of all our troubles is the age-old military question. That never seems to down. Others that the labour unrest or the financial disturbance or the unemployment condition or monopoly is the seat of the disorder. Still others, that our plight is due to national jealousies or unwillingness to work or profiteering or governmental misrule, or some even to prohibition. The fact being that everybody has his own notion and nobody seems to carry anything like general consent.

There is a little company, however, who are always proclaiming that the mischief is deeper down. The pus is not on the surface they insist: it's in the blood. The disorder is not local; it is organic. The disease is not in the flesh: it is in the soul. John Wesley says there are times when the dentist feels that the trouble is not in the

teeth but in the nerves. This little group keeps on contending that our ailments are indications not of any toothache or backache or headache, but of a deeper-seated heartache. G. K. Chesterton asks, "What's wrong with the world?" And the answer he gives is that it is soulless. There is not enough soul in its commerce, in its politics, in its industry, not enough even in its religion. The great need to-day, he urges, is not a renaissance of the intellect but a renaissance of the soul.

"How sweet it was in years far hied
To start the wheels of day with trustful prayer!
To lie down liegely at the eventide
And feel a blest assurance He was there."

Let us note in passing one or two of the most threatening symptoms of our time. Can there be any question for one thing that we have fallen on an irreverent age? And when we think about it, is that strange? How can it well help being irreverent if there is nothing to revere? We certainly cannot revere commodities or merchandise. The Greeks called man *anthropos*, the upward looking creature. The trouble with materialism is it never looks up. But then why should it look up? There is nothing to look up to. So the materialist looks down and he who looks down soon goes down. One cannot look down and soar. We need no Holy Writ to teach us this. If any one doubts it let him read his

Adam Bede. Hetty Sorrel first lost her reverence, then she lost her self-respect, and soon she lost her purity.

Yes, irreverence is flagrant to-day. Some claim that the age is scientific; some say it is sceptical; some say it is sordid; some say it is vulgar. But if I were asked to describe our age in a word, I should say it is irreverent. I am rather inclined to think that reverence is America's lost art. There is nothing sacred any more. There's no Holy Place in life, certainly no Holy of Holies. We are losing our reverence for all the quondam holy things. We are losing our reverence for the Bible, for the Sabbath, for the Church, for the laws of our country, for human life, for the tribunals of Justice, for the sacredness of the moral law, for the Ten Commandments, for the things unseen. We have no reverence for age. The father is the old man, the mother is the old woman. We have no reverence for wedlock. The marriage altar was once a shrine, but we have made of it a huge auction block on which we sell the very jewels of life. We have no reverence for the Sabbath Day or the Church of God. When Oliver Wendell Holmes was an old man, he wrote to a friend that he had just returned from church, and then he added these words, "There is a little plant called reverence in the corner of my soul's garden and I like to water it once a week." Dr. Hale once said to

Berry of Wolverhampton, "I wonder if there's any one left any more who really fears God."

Then is not the age superficial? Are not men and women living largely on the surface of things? Have we not more faith in the physical than in the intellectual? Is not our reading mostly light and trivial? Think of a book like "Main Street" being a best seller! What a commentary on our intellectual life! Is not materialism the great central sun of our firmament? Is not our one great passion the love of mammon? Is not the popular attitude something like this: Do not worry about the future, the important thing is the present. The important place is earth, not heaven. Heaven is problematical, earth is actual. The big thing is to succeed; the big thing is to get on. Never mind getting up, get on. The important thing is to crowd into the flying moments all the thrills you can. Indeed, there are revolutionaries in our midst who do not hesitate to say that man has been marred by his attention to spiritual things. We are familiar with George Frederick Watts' great painting, that hideous figure with a crown of gold on his head and his iron foot crushing the youth and his mailed hand squeezing the maiden who is on his knee. Does it not symbolize the disposition and ideals of a large area of human society to-day?

This is unquestionably a grave impeachment,

but does anybody question its truth? We are thinking mark of the spirit of a good deal of the thought and tone of our time. There is an itch for the sensational. Nothing seems to appeal to the popular mind unless it is spectacular and exciting. Twenty years ago Mr. Sheldon wrote a book entitled "In His Steps" or What would Jesus do? It was a very popular story: it had an unusual circulation. Something like twenty million copies of the book were broadcasted. And there was nothing really remarkable about it. It was simply an attempt to apply the teachings of Jesus to modern life. When Mr. Sheldon wrote the book he was a pastor out in Kansas. He is now the editor of the *Christian Herald* in New York City. Some months ago there was an article from his pen in the *Atlantic* telling the story of how this book of his was dramatized. The movie man had worked it over into a scenario. But lo and behold, when the film was ready for production Mr. Sheldon noticed that he had incorporated into it the League of Nations, the Battle of the Somme, the San Francisco earthquake, a bloody fight between two submarines, some colliding airplanes burning up, etc., etc. "But," said Mr. Sheldon to the movie man, "what do you mean by this? My story was written five and twenty years ago. There was no League of Nations then. There was no Battle of the Somme then. There were no such

things as airplanes then.” “Ah, my friend,” was the reply, “I had to bring your story up to date.” “That’s all right, but my book is dated. There was no wireless in ’96, no radium, no San Francisco earthquake, no Great War.” “You do not understand the film business, my friend. In order to get your story on to Broadway, there must be thrills, there must be action. What better action than a battle? There must be fire and blood, sir. It must go over the top with a hip and a whoop, or it won’t go over at all.”

And this is the spirit of the hour. People are clamouring to be thrilled. The hair must stand on end. Something must be going on all the time. There must be excitement, palpitation, passion, blood and thunder. A money-making fist fight will bring 90,000 people together in breathless suspense. I notice where one of our great monthly magazines gives a forecast of the articles they purpose to publish this coming year, and this is the way they put it: “Some of these articles will send the red tide spurting through your veins.” Another magazine owner has directed that every story in his magazine this year is going to have a red hot sex appeal. “My paper demands hot stuff,” writes another reporter.

One of our modern essayists has drawn a striking contrast between the *Mayflower* and the *Mauretania*. Three hundred years ago the *May-*

flower landed up here at Plymouth. She was a tiny bit of a boat of only 180 tons and hers was a memorable nine weeks' voyage. It was memorable in many ways. For one thing, the little sailing ship was a temple of prayer. The passengers sang psalms and hymns and spiritual songs all the way over, from shore to shore. God Himself was one of the passengers on that historic craft. Three hundred years later another boat made her maiden voyage. She was a great liner. She was huge; she was palatial. She was christened the *Mauretania*. The *Mayflower* would go into her smoking room. The first cabin was filled with gamblers and drunkards. A great London daily in describing the trip used these words, "The smoking room was a bedlam. Match stands, spittoons, glasses and bottles were flying in all directions. On arrival at New York she was met by detectives and a dozen passengers were escorted to the police court." Dean Inge reminds us how apt we are to think that people who travel thirty miles an hour are ten times as civilized as people who travel only ten. But, alas, not infrequently the truth is the other way. Speed is not always progress. Sometimes, as with the falling airplane, it is decline, disastrous decline.

Once more; who will question that our age has about it a spirit of unrest? Is there any one who is not conscious of the fact that society is per-

vaded as perhaps never before by forces of unrest? Even in the awful days of the war there was nothing like the social unrest we see around us to-day. We see glimpses of it in the divorce courts. We see it in the craving for luxury, in the industrial discontent. We see it in the easy way that people sell their homes. We see it in the tendency to wander about. People don't want to stay at home any more. They prefer to be anywhere but home. Home has lost its sweet allurements. We see it in the drift from old moorings. Things that we thought once were stable as the hills are tottering and crumbling. We see it in the worry and the fret and the fever of the times. The normal temperature of the body is 98 or thereabout. That indicates health and good circulation and proper functioning, but when the thermometer runs up into three figures, that shows congestion and disturbance and disease. And these things are equally true in the social fabric. The heat and fever of our time are a symptom of disease. We seem to be standing by the bedside of a sick patient who is suffering from nervous exhaustion. The whole body seems to be filled with fear and anxiety and temperature and unrest. Everybody seems to be breaking his neck to get more, to increase wages, to reduce work. Every one is grabbing for the physical things. Some one says we are like passengers on a channel steamer, every one

scrambling to get the best seat for a rough crossing. There is not a night of the year when you cannot find in this great throbbing city tens of thousands sitting around the boards, and trying by some tickling sensation to get the thrill of what they call life. What does it all mean? It is the denial of the spiritual element in human life. It is the funeral of God.

And there are many thoughtful thinkers to-day who are beginning to feel that the only cure for our enfeebled condition is in getting back to the old landmarks. We must learn to reveal and glorify the divine. God is not dead even if Mr. Hardy thinks He is. That surely was a striking saying of Voltaire's, "If there were no God the world would need to invent one." We must change our standards. The old idea of testing success by material reckonings is doomed; it is a glaring swindle. We must find some spiritual theodolites. A great American jurist said not long ago, "America must get back to God or she will go to the devil in fifty years." Really will it take fifty?

There is nothing that is going to rescue our poor world from its present pitiable condition but a spiritual faith. The only hope is a spiritual hope. Force cannot do it. "Painting the map of the world red cannot do it. Nothing will do it but washing the soul of the world white." Anybody who is not drunk with the wine and

the whisky of worldliness, any one with sober brains, any one who can see clear and straight, must confess that "materialism has made a mess of managing this world." If we cannot mend our ways, certain ruin is ahead. Our civilization that we are always boasting about will go the way of all the rest. Theodore Roosevelt once asked the question, "Is our civilization going to endure?" The question is not as simple or indisputable as it seems. Egypt is gone. Assyria is gone. Persia is gone. Babylon is gone. Greece is gone. Where is haughty Spain? Where is the great Moorish Empire with its architecture and its art? Where is mighty, military Rome? God raised these great nations up and then He cast them down because they failed to do His will. So let us take warning. We must away from the rabble of the crowd. The glory of life is not in its garments, or its mansions, or its trophies, or its crowns. Public honours will die away like the roar of the mob. It's all a bit of empty pageantry. What the world calls success is a good deal like that beautiful mausoleum that a certain millionaire built for himself and which now awaits his body lost at sea. Let us look behind the noisy show and see the real solid facts. The very soul of true religion is belief in an invisible order. The glory of life is in the spiritual. The glory of life is in the bosom of God.

III

TEN TIMES ONE ARE ELEVEN



HE thought that suggests itself is, Where does our real strength come from? Wherein consists, for instance, the strength of a nation or an army or an industrial concern or a government or an institution of any kind? Yes, or an individual? Wherein lies the secret of any individual's power? Does it lie in himself or does it lie in something outside of himself?

It is an interesting question because the cry of the age is for Power. As never before, men are coveting power. We are hearing of water power and steam power and electric power, actinic power, X-ray power. Men talk of intellectual power, pulpit power, magnetic power, spiritual power. Some of our scientists are busy discussing where our heat is going to come from when the forests are all felled and the coal is all mined and the oil peters out. Some of them are working on inventions to tap the earth's central caloric. Others are trying to perfect a battery device of some kind or other to store up the sun's tremendous energy. It is all a quest for power.

The most popular word in our language to-day is that word power. Whatever expresses power is good. The successful man is the man who wields power. Men are striving for wealth because wealth denotes power. The one supreme failure to-day seems to be lack of power. Weakness in some places is almost synonymous with wickedness.

And one of the significant studies in the history of the race is the different conceptions of power that have been held and that are still held. When we ask the question, What is the ruling fact or force in people's lives, we are met with many answers to that inquiry. Some are telling us Truth is, some Beauty, some Character. Love and hatred and lust and pride and fashion are all advanced, and perhaps a greater company than any are arguing for money. See, they say, what money can do. Money is the one great moving potential to-day. Nothing has the ghost of a chance to-day that hasn't money behind it. Money controls the markets of the world. It dictates war and peace. Money can shake every parliament on earth with "one whisper of its golden lips."

Twenty-five years ago Mr. Gladstone said that no individual ought to be permitted to own a hundred million dollars, that it was too much power to be in the hands of any one man. To-day there are several Americans who are reputed

to be worth that sum. And Sir Oliver Lodge recently lecturing to his class and holding in his hand a lump of common clay, said: "Gentlemen, we are beginning to appreciate the marvellous power of atomic chemistry as seen in the behaviour of radium. Maybe there is enough energy in this handful of clay to lift the British fleet from the North Sea and transport it to the hills behind Manchester. But," he continued, "I hope this power will not be discovered until we are fit to use it."

There can be no doubt that this is one of the great problems just now before the world—the control of Power. There is no danger so great as power in the possession of people who do not know how to use it. It is like putting rifles in the hands of children. We are witnessing this evil on every side. Take for instance, the matter of physical weapons. In many quarters, the old faith in the physical still persists. That is the hardest thing to down. The world has always had such a simple, childlike trust in that. Maeterlinck has an essay in one of his books along this line. He calls his essay "In praise of the fist." The bull, he says, has horns, the eagle has talons, the crab has claws, the dog has teeth, and as for man he has a fist. These all have been given for protection, for justice, for revenge. And so he goes on to marshal his arguments in praise of the fist. It is the old story of

brute force and brawn and muscle. We all recognize it immediately.

As long as I can remember, we have been told that self-preservation is the first law of nature, that nature knows no law but the law of selfishness, that she is "red in tooth and claw," that only the fit survive—the fit being the strong. The savage of the jungle used his club. That's how he managed to win respect. And in the industrial jungle to-day, if a man would come out on top, he must swing the big stick too.

But the convincing reply to all this loud talk is that it is not true. The mighty mammoth creatures that were armed and that once ruled the jungle, where are they? Where are the giant mastodons, with tusks twenty feet long, that once roamed across the fields of Siberia? Why, they are extinct. If it were not for some deposit, or some bones in the Triassic rocks, we would not know that such creatures ever existed. Dean Inge in his "Outspoken Essays" says: "Science has condemned to extinction the majestic animals of the Saurian era and has carefully preserved the bug, the louse and the bacteria." The pigmies are with us, the giants have gone.

Where are all the monster marine reptiles—the dinosaur for instance? These ponderous, ungainly monsters were armoured like a dreadnought. Surely they managed to survive. But

no! They seem to have been crushed by their very armour. It is the feeble members of the brute world, the ones that know no armour (the horse, the cow, the dog, the sheep, the goat), that have survived. These are the creatures that have weathered the storm. The strong have vanished, the weak are left to tell the tale.

A few years ago—as late indeed as 1911—Mr. Charles Dawson, the geologist, was telling us of cutting through a gravel bed in the south of England. He was making a scientific observation of the different strata of the soil. It was at a place called Pittsdown, not far from Brighton. When he got down ten or twelve feet he came across the fossil remains of a woolly elephant. He was astonished to find there in quiet Sussex, where the wildest animal to-day is the partridge, the bones of this extinct hairy mammoth.

And this is not all. This victory of weakness is not confined to the brute world. Everywhere the gladiatorial idea is passing. We are gradually rescuing the heroic from the smell of smoke and blood. Some of the weakest creatures are the most tenacious. Mr. Maeterlinck in this same essay cites the case of the ant. “You can pile on top of an ant,” he says, “twenty thousand times its own weight and it will still survive.” The resistance of the beetle is almost incredible. He seems well-nigh armour proof.

But these are the facts. Never were the bully

and the burglar and the freebooter so much in disfavour, never had they such little assurance of success as to-day. Even in the vegetable kingdom it is not the militant thistle but the meek and modest herbaceous plants, like the pansy and the violet, that seem destined to inherit the earth.

And turning to the kingdom of the personal. What shall we say of that great army of the delicate, men like Watt and Kant and Wilberforce and Robert Hall, women like Florence Nightingale and Mrs. Browning. Wordsworth says of Watt: "He was perhaps the most extraordinary man that the country has ever produced." But think what a body he had, hardly any body at all, and what little there was seemed to be diseased. Robert Murray McCheyne was nicknamed the Skeleton, but this skeleton managed, notwithstanding, to shake Scotland from Caithness to the Tweed. Wilberforce, the liberator, the statesman, the orator, we know. But how little we know of Wilberforce the hunchback, the man who for twenty years was compelled to take opium to keep himself alive. When he arose to address the House of Commons, one reporter wrote: "He looked like a dwarf that had jumped out of a fairy tale." There is a great company of these heroes and heroines. Their strength was certainly not in their muscles or their fists.

Or approaching the matter from another angle. There is a type of men who call themselves prac-

tical men and who are peculiarly strong on statistics. They are always taking a census. They like to go with the crowd. They glory in majorities. Perhaps there never was a time when people had such an unbounded confidence in conventions and mass movements as to-day. Matthew Arnold used to say that our most sacred book is the book of Numbers. With many, figures are a perfect fetish. One of our popular expressions is, to keep up with the procession. The old prophet speaks of the man with the measuring line. The man with the measuring line is always with us. He is an important man in the commercial world; he is an influential man in the political world, and often—too often indeed—he cuts quite a swath in the religious world. He measures success by numerals, by majorities, by pluralities. Ten times one are ten he is always telling us. But sometimes ten times one are more than ten. Ten men working together will do more than ten men working separately. Ten times one are ten plus their concerted action. It is the psychology of crowds. We know that people in a crowd are capable of rising to higher heights or sinking to lower depths than any of them would individually. There is always this unseen factor to reckon with, and when the unseen factor is a spiritual one, it makes a formidable difference.

I think we need to be reminded these days that the great truths that have moved mankind have not owed their triumphs to any numerical proponderance. Victory has not always been on the side of the biggest battalions, Napoleon notwithstanding. There is no literature in the world that pays so little regard to majorities as the Bible. There was a time when the whole world believed that the earth was flat. That did not save the delusion. Perhaps the history of the Hebrew people is the strongest proof we have of the impotence of mere numbers. They were surrounded by great races that far outvoted them. Indeed, they were only as it were a drop in the bucket. But where are these races to-day? Where is Egypt? Egypt had a population ten times as great as Palestine. Egypt tried to destroy Palestine; so did Assyria. Where is Persia? Persia had a population twenty times as great as Palestine. But Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome rose and fell, came and went. And yet this little company of Jews, small and obscure, trampled on in the march of history, still remains and they are mightier to-day than ever.

A good many of us, unfortunately, are almost uncomfortable to-day if we find ourselves in the minority. But when we come to think of it, that is not the smallest reason for being discouraged. It is minorities as a rule that have saved the

world. Time and time again truth has been on the side where the few were lined up. It is the few that have always kept the world sweet. Wilberforce was in the minority on the question of slavery. Telemachus was in the minority on the question of gladiatorial displays. I rather think, with the gloomy Dean of St. Paul's, "there is not the slightest probability that the big crowd will ever be found in front of the narrow gate." I feel confident they will continue to be found at the movies or the ball game. I am reminded of the statesman who, when his speech was applauded by the mob, turned to the chairman and whispered, "Have I said anything very foolish?" And anyway, we have high authority for the words, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it."

There is still another point of view that is popular. So many seem to think that a movement has no chance these days unless it has influence and prestige behind it. And so their first idea when they are beginning any new venture is to get a list of influential names to endorse their program. They seek as patrons and patronesses the great and the notable. They besiege the seats of the mighty. It is a singular fact that Jesus had no great or commanding name in His cabinet. One wonders sometimes why He did not summon to His side such a man

as Nicodemus for instance. But not so; His followers were mostly humble folk. His disciples were nearly all peasants. Jesus never relied on what the world calls greatness. It was the weak things He picked out to do His work.

All of which leads us to our challenge that ten times one are not always ten. Sometimes ten times one are eleven, sometimes twelve. Sometimes one and one are more than two. It all depends on who or what the ones are. Man's real strength is never in himself. His strength comes from a higher alliance. It comes from being harnessed to the Unseen. All mathematical equations are reduced to absurdity here. It was Lincoln who said, was it not, "Find out the way that God is going and go that way." It is always God and Newton, God and Faraday, God and Agassiz. It is not the sword of Gideon, it is "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon." As Amiel in his journal puts it: "Strong as the universe or feeble as the worm, according as we represent God or only ourselves; as we lean upon the Infinite or stand alone."

Fifty years ago a great German philosopher by the name of Lotze proved to us that all real power in the world is spiritual power. And no thinker to-day disputes that fact. The great storage plant is a spiritual one and Faith is the key that turns the switch. We speak of the strength of Gibraltar. What makes Gibraltar

strong? Is it the rock? There is no more strength in Gibraltar's rock than in any other mammoth rock. The strength of Gibraltar, said a great statesman recently, is in the Empire that owns it and governs it. The strength of Gibraltar is in the English Crown, and the strength of the Christian is in his God. The Good Book says, "Be strong," but it adds, "Be strong in the Lord."

We are frequently reminded that the word Faith is not once found in the Old Testament. There is but one exception and that is in the book of Deuteronomy, and the word as it is found in that passage does not mean what we mean by it. Well, that is one of those statements that is true literally and false every other way. For when we come to the letter to the Hebrews we read: "By faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Noah, by faith Abraham, by faith Moses, by faith Gideon, by faith Samson, by faith David." It seems to be all faith. There doesn't appear to be anything else but faith. Everything these grand old worthies did, they seem to have done through faith.

The founders of our American Republic were men of faith. Every great chapter in our history is a chapter of faith. True our historians do not always see it that way, but if some Jewish Rabbi were writing our history, would it not be something like this:

By faith Columbus began the great adventure in 1492.

By faith a little shell of a boat of 180 tons called the *Mayflower* ventured out on the stormy Atlantic and landed at Cape Cod in November, 1620. She had eighty souls on board. They founded a nation, the greatest nation that ever breathed the air of liberty. It was all a great gamble of faith.

By faith Washington issued his farewell address to the people in 1796.

By faith Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence the same year.

By faith Lincoln issued his call for 75,000 volunteers on April 15th, 1861.

By faith Marcus Whitman started West with three other missionaries in 1836 and saved Oregon to the Union—he and his wife having been murdered eleven years later by the Indians.

By faith Cyrus W. Field organized the Atlantic Telegraph in 1856 and succeeded, after two failures, in laying a cable between Ireland and Newfoundland.

And so on. A Hebrew historian would have seen God in everything. Every chapter would have been a psalm of faith. Because Faith is the bond that links man to God and enables God to work through him. “This is the victory that overcometh the world even your faith.”

The trouble with most of us in our religious work is that we do not avail ourselves of the power at our disposal. We pray for the outpouring of a blessing, when what is needed is

not an outpouring so much as an in-letting. The windows are open. It is our hearts that are shut. The power is at our doors clamouring for admission. As some one puts it, "The block on the line is just outside our own hearts." There is no obstacle in the perpendicular. The obstacle is in the horizontal. So many Christians are wrestling with God to come into their lives and give them power, when what they need is to swing wide the doors and receive the power. What use is the wind to push our little craft unless we lift a sail to catch it? Of what use is the eternal fact of gravity unless we remove the barriers? We must comply with the conditions. We must enter into partnership with the eternal forces. We must coöperate. Why is it that on a hot day in summer the higher we ascend in an airplane the colder we get? We are nearing the great source of heat and yet the heat is all the time getting less. It is because heat, like everything else, needs an atmosphere. And the human element is just as essential as the divine. We are the atmosphere. All power is from above, but we must receive the power and transmit it and diffuse it. The power is all His. We are nothing at all except in so far as we are used. No man has ever done a great work for God until he was first humbled by the conviction that of himself he could do nothing. "We have to empty the organ pipes of our own poor breaths

and get them filled with the winds of heaven before they will pour forth music." All the great prophets and apostles and preachers were great and mighty because they felt themselves unworthy and impotent. It was their humility that raised them up. They let God do with them as He pleased and He pleased to make them giants.

You will recall the story of Charles Kingsley's "Yeast," how Nevgara, the base criminal, ran into the woods in his desperation, and there, lonely, abandoned, heart-sick, conscience-smitten, hell-tortured, face to face with his foulness and his sin, threw himself down on his knees among the leaves and cried out: "O God, if you can make anything of a villain like me, I will be Thine." And then, it will be remembered, how a strange light celestial came into his heart, and when he opened his eyes how the bushes about him burst into flame and colour, and he rose up a new man. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in God." And the nation too! What is the trouble with our land to-day? Is not our great trouble that we are forgetting God? Sometimes it looks very much as if our Republic was losing its soul. America is worth about two hundred and fifty billion dollars, but what good is that going to be to her if she loses her soul? America must get back to God. Certainly she must if she is going to save her soul.

IV

MILLIONAIRES



THE New Testament seems at first sight to be rough on rich men. But the question always arises, who is the rich man? How much wealth must one command to be labelled rich?

There was a time when a person who could sign his check for \$100,000 was accounted rich, but he would not be so regarded to-day. In these days of astronomical figures six digits do not make a rich man. One needs at least seven, possibly eight, maybe nine. It all depends on who the assessor is. And if the assessor is Jesus we have no means of reckoning just where the boundary lies or when one crosses over. He laid down no lines, no limits. He once said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into His Kingdom, and the saying has puzzled and troubled many, although I think unnecessarily. Because what He really said was not how hardly shall they that have riches but "how hardly shall they that trust in their riches." It is impossible for a man to enter His Kingdom who trusts in

his riches. His Kingdom is not entered that way. That ticket is no good, that key does not fit. It is quite as impossible for a camel to go through a needle's eye as for a rich man who trusts in his riches to enter the Kingdom of the Spirit.

The Master, let us make clear at the outset, never condemns money as such and He puts no limit on its legitimate accumulation. On these points He was silent. He had nothing to say. He was not a professor of economics; He was a teacher of religion. Wealth to Him was not a question of quantity; it was a touchstone of character, and that purpose can be served as well oftentimes by a small balance as by a great fabulous return. "Where one's treasure is there will his heart be," be the treasure little or be it large. What Jesus condemns is mammon. All the gold in Wall Street is helpless to harm if it is kept in the right place, but two five-cent bits of nickel will blind the man who places them over his optics. Some one has remarked of dirt that it is clay and earth in the wrong place. When dirt is in the garden it is a most desirable thing: it gives us vegetables, berries, fruits, flowers. But in the kitchen it is extremely objectionable stuff; it is a spring of infection and disease. Mammon is money in the wrong place. Money is a good thing in the hand; it is a pitiably poor thing in the heart. When money gets into the heart it is no longer money; it becomes mammon.

What we are apt to lose sight of, however, is that there are many kinds of riches. Material wealth is not the only wealth. Money magnates are not the only favourites of fortune. Do we not know those who are millionaires intellectually for instance, men of vision and power and genius. Some of them have discovered great cosmic laws, some have formulated great codes, some have written standard works. They are poets, artists, philosophers, inventors, teachers, statesmen. Some are constructive leaders in the affairs of government to-day; some are working away quietly in their laboratories. I am thinking of a great scientist like Mr. Edison or a great philosopher like Bertrand Russell, or a great writer like Mr. Wells or a great naturalist like the late John Burroughs. How brainy these men, and yet is it not true that oftentimes it is their very brains that seem to block the way to any spiritual approach. It is never an easy thing for a great scholar to become a little child. It is a costly surrender to confess that "Not many wise, not many noble are called." Not for a moment would we be severe on these men, or unjust to them, and call their trouble pride, because many of them are the very antinome of that. Certainly Mr. Edison is not a proud man. Never have we heard of his ever having boasted of anything he ever did. Instance the case of Darwin. The Church has said many hard things

about Mr. Darwin. And yet to many of us Charles Darwin seems a good deal of a saint. Born in a wealthy home, inheriting a considerable estate, he might have lived a lazy, selfish, useless life. But not so! From the very beginning he dedicated himself to the discovery of truth and he went about it with the charming humility of a little child, just reporting what he saw or thought he saw.

But this misses the point. Pride is a very insidious thing, a very subtle thing, especially pride of intellect. Being grounded on reason, it of course flatters the reason. The reason ministers to the vanity and the vanity straightway turns around and compliments the reason. It is a mutual admiration society. Then it is so easy to become absorbed in details and forget unity. As Goethe said, "The constant use of the microscope interferes with the normal use of the eye." These men are gifted and they know they are gifted. Their wisdom is worldly wisdom. They have no interest in any truth that the intellect cannot formulate. And this is the peril of much of our intellectual life to-day.

I think on the other hand of a quiet, beautiful soul like Asa Gray. How profound and deep and wise he was! How from the very first he had read the significance of Darwinism and accepted its general law, and yet to the very last, humble as a little child in his loyalty to the voice of

revelation. Or instance a man like Newton! Was there ever a more unassuming student than Sir Isaac Newton? Did he not compare himself to a lad walking along the shore, stooping down every now and then, and as he put it, "picking a few pebbles from the beach." Or who that has not been drawn by the simplicity of Faraday. Michael Faraday was never troubled by any conflict between science and religion. How charming that story of the great physicist when he was one night lecturing before an audience of London scientists. After the lecture was concluded the Prince of Wales arose to propose a vote of thanks. The motion was put and carried and when they looked around for the lecturer he was gone. He had slipped out the back door, and over to the prayer-meeting, to renew his fellowship with God.

Then there are the people of great artistic and social gifts, those of unusual personal accomplishments. Here is a young girl endowed with an exceptional voice, let us suppose. She can delight audiences with her singing. What an endowment is hers! What a power she wields! Is she not truly a millionaire? Maybe in addition she is a child of culture and position and influence, with a beautiful home to which to welcome her friends. She has a gracious presence, a simple charm. What a telling work she could do if she would make the sacrifice and use her

gifts and her charm, not for her own selfish pleasure, but for the enrichment of the world! Think you it is an easy thing to do? I cannot so regard it. It means surrender and sacrifice and the giving up of many other delightful things that one would like to do. Perhaps it is fully as difficult to make this sacrifice as it was for the young man to whom Jesus said, "Go and sell all your goods and give the proceeds to the poor." Do you think it was an easy thing for George Herbert, the pride of Cambridge University, to renounce all his ambitions and devote his life to the Christian ministry? He was in high favour at court and in his position as public orator he wrote all the official letters to the Government. Replying to a friend who sought to dissuade him, he said, "I desire to advance the glory of Him who gave them to me. And I will labour to be like my Master by making humility lovely in the eyes of men."

The truth then is more searching and far-reaching than at first seems. "How hardly shall they who trust in their riches enter the Kingdom." So stated, it is certainly not difficult to accept. But is it any easier for those who trust in their talents or their titles? Every endowment is a trust. Is your endowment beauty, young woman? You are truly a millionaire but bear in mind the legacy is a trust. Have you an artistic temperament? That too is a trust. Do

you possess any gift of pen or voice or pencil, anything that wins admiration or applause—all these accomplishments are trusts. You are a trustee of these treasures. They are intended as stepping-stones to something higher. We call a wealthy man a man of means, intimating that the man's wealth is a means to a higher attainment. The standing wonder about strength is its selfishness. Mazzini was a devout believer in God, but he rejected Christianity on the ground that it taught men to be selfish; it taught them, he claimed, to be so absorbed in their own personal salvation that they neglected their duty on earth. It is a sad misconception but a common one. Strange that power as a rule does not visualize and grasp and evaluate its indebtedness. Think of a great country like America standing aloof and folding her hands and saying to a rocking, suffering world, "I dread entanglements, I cannot interfere." This is isolation no doubt, but there is grave doubt as to whether it can be called splendid. Our gifts and blessings do not belong to us in fee simple to do as we please with. We are the custodians of these things for the sake of mankind. If you use your privilege selfishly it is quite possible it may pall on you. Indeed quite likely! It is said that there were times when Caruso, the great tenor, longed for obscurity. He was reported once as saying: "Ah, it is a curse, this voice. Caruso is

sick of it long ago—per Bacco! It is a nuisance; one cannot live as one wishes and have an encumbrance like this. One cannot eat, sleep, drink or be human. The burdens of my gift are greater than the rewards. Often before I go to sleep at night I pray I will awaken with my voice lost forever. But in the morning the voice—my master—is better than ever.”

Madame Guyon was a strikingly beautiful woman. Wherever she went her wit and charm evoked applause. She acknowledged the power of the world. It was a thorn in her flesh. Then at twenty-two she was stricken with smallpox and all her beauty slipped away. But it was not all loss, for she gained something else and it proved to be something better. She became one of the greatest religious enthusiasts of all time. Her lovely face would no doubt have dazzled the society of Paris for a few years, but it was taken away. And instead of an unusual face we have an unusual life, a life that will shine on and on until the end of time, “a beacon light in that dense mediæval darkness.” Sir Robert Ball in his lectures says that a man who carries a sack of corn on earth could carry six sacks on the moon. But on a world as large as the sun his watch would weigh about five pounds. That is to say, it is the pull of the planet we are on that makes things heavy. The bigger the planet the greater the pull. And if this world is the im-

portant prize to us, then little wonder if it has a mighty pull.

Mark Guy Pearse in his memoirs says, "There are men who do not care for any asset they cannot conveniently cash." They are gluttons for the dollar. They are so taken up with business that their hearts have become asphalted. They have no room for what they call sentiment. "The children are troublesome and are sent to the nursery. The birds are noisy and should be shot. And as for the flower garden, they would turn it into a potato patch unless flowers paid better." These people are sharp and shrewd and what the world calls successful. If I wanted advice on finance I would likely go to them. But if I were in trouble I should never dream of turning their way. They have no place in their whole make-up for the spiritual side of things. Think contrariwise of a man like General Booth. It was his custom during the later years of his life to send out birthday greetings. His message at seventy-five was entitled "What I would do with my life if I had to live it over again." This was the message: "I will tell you what I would do could I go back to the beginning of my career. I would offer it up without a moment's hesitation on the altar of redeeming love. In pursuance of that I would resolve to be something that counts in the strife raging around me between good and evil. I would be a man of

spiritual strength. I would be a man of sacrifice. I would be a man of prayer, I would be a man of holiness. I would have compassion for human suffering. I would be a man of faith." Tell me, was not this man a millionaire? Was he not one of Heaven's capitalists? And was not his wealth truly anointed? Verily indeed it was. He realized that his business here was not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a sacrifice for many. "Open my heart," said Browning, "and you will find written inside of it one word—Italy."

"My heart is in the coffin here with Cæsar," says Mark Antony.

"My heart's in the Highlands," sings Burns. "My heart is not here."

"Where is thine heart?" says Jesus. "It is where thy treasure is."

As Joyce Kilmer sings:

"Lord, Thou did'st suffer more for me
Than all the hosts of land and sea.
So let me render back again
This millionth of Thy gift; Amen."

V

SAINTS IN SODOM



R. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES wrote a story which he called "Elsie Venner." It is a snake story. The scene of the story is laid in New England, in a little town lying at the foot of a mountain celebrated for its reptiles. Living in the town was a young girl by the name of Elsie Venner. She was a restless child—wild, wayward, capricious. She was very pretty but there was something about her beauty, something in her eyes, something in her gliding, curving movements that reminded everybody she met of a rattlesnake. She shared too in some of their strange powers. She seemed able to charm them as they charm the birds. She had a good many of their likes and dislikes. The leaves of the white ash affected her just as they do the serpent. As she grew older she began to manifest the most peculiar singularities of taste and temper. Strange stories began to circulate, so that the whole town talked about her, and when she appeared on the street every one would turn and say, "That's Elsie Venner." She would steal

away from her home in the quiet of the night when all the town was fast asleep and seek out their haunts. She loved to handle and fondle them. In fits of passion she would bite and the bites were poisonous. The physician always cauterized them as he would the bite of some venomous creature. And the explanation of her strange peculiarities seemed to be that a little while before she was born her mother had been bitten by a crotalus, and had died from the wound immediately after giving birth to her child. So Elsie was born with the poison of the rattler in her blood and with a good deal of the nature of the serpent in her moods.

We are hearing much to-day again about Mr. Darwin. He is once more in the limelight. To be sure his critics are still many, but the army of his friends keeps steadily growing, and among the better class. Perhaps it is not going too far to say that his book has had more influence on human thought than any other book ever printed, save the Bible. Its broad, general principles are becoming more and more each year the working hypothesis of the scientist, the biologist, the sociologist, yes, even of the theologian. The fact of evolution is not questioned by most scientists any more: the only doubt they entertain is the method.

Now two of the fundamental laws of the "Origin of Species" are the law of heredity and

the law of environment. "We are all born with a history in us." This is one of the corner-stones of evolutionary thought. "Like father like son," we say. "He's a chip of the old block." That there is a transmission of features no one doubts. When we meet a Jew or a Chinaman there is no uncertainty in our minds on that score. And not only are features transmitted; tastes and tricks and temperaments are transmitted too. Modern scientists like Galton and Ribot have brought to light many facts revealing what a force heredity is in our lives.

A force both for evil and for good! Children are what their parents are. A father may pollute his offspring: a mother may predispose her child. Some people do not believe in predestination but this is predestination with revenge. The spring is poisoned at the fountain and the water is never pure, or it is sweetened and so forever fresh. Some months ago a great surgeon told us of operating on a young lad. A blow on the head years before had induced kleptomania. Heredity too may strike the blow that cracks the skull and creates a degenerate.

And environment likewise is a fact to be reckoned with. Sometimes the slightest impression determines the groove. If you scratch a pane of glass with a diamond point the cleavage will follow the line. Buckle goes so far as to say that what we eat decides what we are. A

nation is determined by its diet. There are writers to-day who are telling us that man is a mere feather on the wave. He is swept along by the current. The determining factor is external. Writers like Galsworthy! According to Galsworthy man is helpless against the pressure of his inheritance or his entourage. Nearly all his victims go down before "birth's invidious bar." Or if blood doesn't damn them, climatology does. So readily do they surrender. Here I am writing these words. It is a beautiful summer morning. The day is warm and I am stretched out under the lilac bushes. Across the way there is a vast estate owned by a millionaire, who has almost ransacked both hemispheres and the islands of the sea for treasures and curiosities to adorn his home and his grounds—antelopes from Africa, vicunas from South America. He took particular pride in a couple of reindeer he brought from Alaska, placing them in a ten-acre enclosure of the richest verdure. But the luxury was too much for them and they died. Poor creatures, they had been rooted out of their native soil. Their national habitat was the cold, frozen peaks of Alaska.

The beauty about the Christian faith, however, is that it can master these things. Science tells us that we are the inevitable results of all that has gone before, but the fundamental fact of religion is that we have a living will within that

can change what has gone before. A resolute will is more than a match for the past; it can even shape the future. Africanus was the son of a cannibal chief and yet he grew up to be a great Christian scholar and a bishop of the Church. Heredity does not explain Africanus. Ahaz, one of the worst kings that ever reigned over Judah, was followed by his son Hezekiah, one of the best. There are many of these contradictions in life. Something like the old fountain Arethusa in ancient Greece. It ran for I cannot recall how many miles through the salt and bitter sea, all the way from Peloponnesus to Trinacria and then shot up bubbling, cool, sweet drinking water in far-off Ortygia.

And the same is true of environment. Environment is a big word but men sometimes make their own environment. The pull of the popular tide is tremendously strong but men have breasted even that. No environment can compel a man to be bad who really wants to be good, nor to be good who is determined to be bad. Lucifer was unhappy in heaven. They could not keep Artemus in hell. The Christian evangel is that the new life in the soul can neutralize any poison and breast any flood. It is an interior energy that can defy taint or tempest. It is a victory over contrary conditions. The promise is always "To him that overcometh." Tropical shrubs will not flourish in the Arctic Circle but

Christianity can flourish in any circle. Obadiah kept his conscience clear in the household of Ahab. Daniel preserved his integrity in the court of Babylon, and Nehemiah was true to the faith of his fathers in the palace of the Persian emperor. So many are telling us to-day that American character is being determined by our mountains and lakes and rivers and prairies, by the streets and tenements of our big cities, by the log cabins out on the frontiers. But the facts riddle this theory to fragments. There are scores of things stronger than environment, a high ideal for instance, a steady purpose, a firm conviction, a noble example. Abraham Lincoln has had more to do with the shaping of our Americanism than all the mountains in Arizona or the lakes in the Adirondacks or the tenements in Manhattan, more than all the log cabins in Texas. There were saints, we are told, in Cæsar's household. And let it not be forgotten who this fellow Cæsar was; he was no less a personage than the infamous Nero. Mrs. Booth lived an apostolic life in Whitechapel. David Livingstone died a spiritual hero in the heart of Africa. High up in the cold Sierras, far past the timber line, may be seen stunted trees, smaller than currant bushes. Foresters tell us they are at least fifty years old. It is a splendid object lesson of a stubborn fight against storm and violence. The brave little shrubs struggle on and

wrestle with their handicap. How many thousands of lives are grappling with their handicap, and grappling successfully, above "the human timber line."

"In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Beneath the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody but unbowed."

The world is full of wonderful things: the age of miracles is not past. The revival of wonder is not an idle dream. "Greater works than these shall ye do." And when we stop to think it out, is there any greater wonder than to be a saint in Sodom? The Bible takes us into the slums but it never leaves us there. It always leads us out. It says, When you're in Rome do not do as the Romans do, but try and get the Romans to do as you do. One would suppose that the army was a poor school for morals but some of the choicest souls that ever walked our earth were army men. One might mention General Gordon, General Howard, General Armstrong, General Havelock, Stonewall Jackson and a long list of like immortals. The stage has always been under fire. But even the stage can show her company of the shining faithful. Thayer, the biographer of Beethoven, tells us that one of the greatest of the composer's symphonies was constructed out of a simple folk-lore song. He was lying half asleep in a little coun-

try tavern when a simple shepherd lad passed under the windows humming a sentimental ballad. The melody captivated the master. He tossed it about in his dreams all night. He turned it over and over into infinite variations. He incorporated into it strange piercing cries and sweet minor strains. And in the morning the simple ballad came forth one of his most glorious creations—the Pastoral Symphony, one of his nine greatest works. This is the triumph of all art, turning the formless into form, turning the colourless into colour. In the poet's hands two dogs, two jolly beggars, are "shaped into measures of magic." To take hold of the simple things and glorify them—this is art. The transfiguration of the ordinary is the extraordinary. They are telling us to-day that the newest thing in gardening is a process whereby the nature of the soil becomes almost a matter of indifference. Any soil can be made to yield anything. Burbank makes common sand bear beautiful roses. It is a splendid parable of the truth that the flower of a beautiful character can be grown in any clime, under any sky, out of any soil, by any fallen son of Adam.

VI

CONQUERING THREE WORLDS



HERE are several standards by which to judge any conquering career. One is to get a tape line and measure its external dimensions. The length and breadth and height are so and so; so many books written, so many discoveries made, so many battles fought, so many Victoria crosses won, so many degrees conferred, so many millions amassed, so much space in the public press! It is the standard of mundane glory and popular applause. When we visit any of the great capitals of Europe and note the monuments, one is struck with the fact that they are so largely monuments to fighting men; or if not to fighting men, to royalty. And royalty decked out as a rule in helmets and spurs and medals. Even the places of worship, it would seem, are not infrequently burial places for the soldier. St. Paul's Cathedral is a veritable temple of Mars. London has no monument to John Wesley, none to General Booth, but London has at least a dozen monuments to the Duke of Wellington. Here is Sir Hiram Maxim! What a tri-

umphant career was his! Certainly he was an inventive genius if ever there was one. He won medal after medal in the realm of actual achievement. He devised a gun called after his name. It is one of the most deadly weapons on the field of battle. It can fire more than six hundred rounds a minute, and with absolute accuracy as far as two miles. Think of the hundreds of thousands of boys who must have fallen by the Maxim gun alone in the great war. He won fame and fortune. He was knighted by King George. Truly indeed by the laws of cold steel he was one of the conquerors of the world, or rather he was a conqueror of one of the worlds. He conquered the world without.

But the point is, are these things really conquests? Is the path of war the road to lasting glory? Is it right to call a thing successful simply because it issues in a fabulous income or in the slaughter of the innocents? If so, then some of history's heroes are crowning failures. Mazzini for instance! So often we tack on the right word to the wrong thing. So often a worthless fellow wears a noble name. Not infrequently what men call success is nothing less than cool and calculating swindle. There was little that the world would cheer in Paul's career. Judged by every earthly rule it was a foiled and bankrupt thing. From the day that he staggered blind and weak into the streets of Damascus,

down to the last hour of his martyrdom, it was a long story of sickness and hardship and loneliness and imprisonment and peril. And yet when we come to assess the world within; when we catalogue the inward laurels, the trophies won on the field of character; when we count up the spiritual garlands, the triumphal arches of the inner life; when we register the times that he outmanœuvred and routed the beast; when we judge the man by this standard it was a life of magnificent and daring mastery. He comes out of the struggle wearing palms.

There is one expression along this line that the Apostle uses that is worth looking into. It is found in that great, thrilling climax where he is enumerating the enemies we have to face,—tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword. And it will be recalled how he tosses them all aside with the observation that in all these things we are more than conquerors. "More than conquerors!" How, it may be asked, can one be more than a conqueror? Is that not an impractical ideal, a sort of rhetorical flourish? Isn't it a little too ethereal and super-mundane to be true? No, a good many things we are asked to believe are not ethereal enough to be true. The Apostle is not speaking of the world without. He is speaking, remember, of the world within. And there are no limits to the heights to which one can hope to soar in that sky.

How many a hero has conquered the air, conquered the sea, conquered the mountains, conquered the cold, and then failed to conquer himself. Here is Alexander lying drunk under the table while all around are the empty tankards telling the story of the night's debauch. He has conquered the world and sighed for more worlds to attack, but when face to face with the greater world, the world within, he was a pitiable sight. No man is a master here till he has learned to master himself. What profit is there in overcoming one's enemy if we leave behind a legacy of hate? The right way to meet evil is to show forth the opposite of it in one's own life. If we would conquer pride in men we must be clothed with humility ourselves. If we would lift our friend out of the depths of despair we must let hope shine out of our own eyes. If we would really get the better of our enemy we must love him and do him a kindness.

This is the glory of men like Abraham Lincoln. It will be remembered when Richmond was taken the military men arranged a great procession. They had planned to march into the captured city with Lincoln heading the parade. "But," said the President, "how will I look at the head of those troops; that is no place for me." "Why," they said, "you are the President, that is the very place for you." "But," said the great man, "will it not hurt the feelings of the

Southern people to have such a procession?" They answered, "We must not think of that; we must think of the victory." "But," said Mr. Lincoln, "I do think of that, and if I go to Richmond I will go in a quiet way: I will go with no banners." And so the whole program was defeated, and when President Lincoln did go down to Richmond a few days later, he walked up the street alone. And when he spoke to the people, this is what he said: "I am not here to see what you can do for me, but I am here to see what we can do for you."

This has always been one of the crowning evils of war. Disputes are never settled by the sword. The victories won on the battlefields of earth do not bring real peace; they bring hatred and bitterness and revenge. It was General Grant who said he knew nothing sadder than a defeated army, unless it was a victorious army. We have it on good authority that Bismarck just before he died said that if he were to wage another successful war, one of the terms of peace would be that Germany should pay a large indemnity to the losers. We speak sometimes as if peace were simply the cessation of hostilities. But is that so? Is peace nothing more than the sheathing of the sword? Is it nothing more than a temporary truce, a sort of *modus vivendi* enabling nations to patch up their troubles and get along together somehow? Is that all it means? Surely it is

not enough to lay a country in ruins and call the devastation peace! A man was once cheated out of some money by a crook whom he had trusted. He made no effort, however, to punish the fellow and get even. Some one said to him, "Why not take the matter into the courts?" "Well," he answered, "it's this way. If I do that, I will likely win my case, but it will take a long time and it will stir up a lot of bad blood, and I reckon if I go to work I can make up in the meantime what I lost and feel a whole lot better." Surely that man had found the deeper secret. He was like Lincoln. He had no room in his heart for the memory of a wrong.

Some one has observed that there are four ways in which to treat a fellow mortal who tries to injure us. One is the way of vindictiveness. It says, Well, if he hits me I will hit him back, only a little harder. The second is the way of retribution; If he hits me I will return the blow and hand him a dose of his own elixir. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." The third is the way of injured pride; If he tries to hurt me I will just ignore the matter and treat him with silent contempt. And the fourth is the way of Lincoln; If a man wrongs me I will say to him, "Well, my brother, you evidently do not want to be my friend, but I do want to be yours."

But there is still another world besides the world without and the world within. It is pos-

sible to have one's passions under control and yet not be a victor in the Pauline sense. Mr. H. G. Wells gives us his judgment as to the six greatest men in history. Few of us will agree with him in the selection. It is astonishing, for one thing, is it not, to put Asoka in this hall of fame, a man who massacred his own brothers, and leave out, well Paul, say. But it is interesting to note that with this exception, not one of his heroes is a great king who carved his deeds in bronze, nor a great soldier who wrote them in blood, but five gentle, unselfish souls, who achieved immortality by living and labouring for others—Jesus, Buddha, Aristotle, Bacon, Lincoln. Truly indeed

“Conquest comes by fighting
More than conquest without fighting.”

I have always been charmed myself with the life of General Gordon. Gordon is one of my heroes. Although he was a soldier he never carried a sword. He always led his troops unarmed. He carried nothing but a cane painted white. It was this fearless confidence that so inspired his men. The man was so full of the spiritual that his soldiers stood in awe of him. They said he is not human; he is in league with the world above. It was the man's absolute goodness that made him mighty. Or take St. Francis: Probably the man who has wielded the widest influ-

ence on the world since the days of the Apostles was St. Francis. How did he do it? He was poor, as we know. Poverty was his bride. "He was married to poverty." It will be remembered that when he started out upon the road to follow the gleam, he surrendered every dollar he had, gave up all his goods, and when his father, who did not approve of his son's foolish notions, somewhat sternly reminded him that the clothes on his body were not his own, the young man took them off in the market-place and went out into the world naked. Yet St. Francis of Assisi has had more influence on mankind than any Czar or Cræsus or Cæsar. No millionaire with his untold millions has ever affected the human race as St. Francis has. How did he do it? He did it by the sheer power of goodness.

And so it is not always the people who succeed, as we say, who are the conquerors. Contrariwise indeed, it would sometimes seem that the great army of spiritual champions were what the world calls failures. To go down to defeat courageously, but with the flag of faith held aloft—this is to be a real victor. To smile at pain with the Love Divine near—this is to be a victor. To look death in the face and be able to say: "Come life, come death, come poverty or wealth, come sickness, come health, come what will, what matter if only it be the will of God,"—this is to be a victor. Some one notes that humanity might

have prospered fairly well without its successes, but could never have gotten along without its failures. Because pretty nearly every great blessing we enjoy to-day is built upon a failure. Across the river Tay in Scotland there is a wonderful bridge, the longest in the world, but it is laid upon the ruins of a failure. A great engineer, Sir Thomas Bouch, many years before had designed and completed a similar structure, which collapsed one dark night in a gale and carried with it fourscore human beings down to a watery grave, and drove the famous engineer into an asylum, a wreck both in body and mind. Other engineers followed. They learned from Sir Thomas' mistakes; they improved upon his plans; and their success is due largely to his failure. So three cheers to the man who fails. Not infrequently he is the real victor. I am thinking of a room where a lifelong pain is developing a beautiful character. I am thinking of another home where domestic infelicity is being borne with a courage that no soldier boy in Flanders ever excelled. I am picturing a quiet mother growing pinched in face and bent in form because of a devil of a husband who is just as ugly and hateful as a man could possibly be. Yes, and further down the street, I am thinking of another kind of a husband, nursing with cheerfulness and tenderness an invalid wife and trying to make her comfortable and happy. And a

step further there is another home where a widow, with four little mouths to feed, is fighting a battle in the face of the high cost of living that calls for just as much grit and pluck and ginger as any drive on the banks of the Somme. Aren't these things victories too?

“O great is the hero who wins a name,
But greater many and many a time
Some pale-faced fellow who dies in shame,
And lets God finish the thought sublime.”

There is a story of a young priest who began his ministry with great enthusiasm. He wished to do good in the spirit of his Master, and that Master was blessing him richly in his work. But one day an old bishop asked him if he felt he could go on just the same, provided he met with failure. And the young priest in the joy of his work said that he could go on no matter what the results might be. Personal rewards were not essential. Years passed by and the young man met with reverses. His parish was not as responsive as once it was. He saw little or no fruit from his labours, and he lost in a measure the consciousness of the Divine Presence.

One afternoon when things looked particularly dark, he was thinking of the question the old bishop asked him many years before, and he was feeling very lonely and depressed. He started out for a walk along the shore and came upon a little hut where a poor widow lived. It was

growing dusk, and he noticed a brazier outside in which a bright fire was burning. It was rather cold and she was standing warming herself by the blaze. Stepping up, he ventured "Good evening." She noticed that he was a priest of the Church, and invited him into her humble dwelling. "I have no fire in the room," she said, "but if you don't mind coming into the kitchen, you'll find it comfortable I think." "And why do you keep this fire outside?" he asked. To which she answered, and this was her reply: "Do you see those rocks yonder? They are very dangerous. Some years ago my only boy was drowned out there," pointing to the dashing waves, "and ever since I have kept this beacon burning as a warning to others. I cannot afford two fires, and so I live in the kitchen mostly and keep the one outside alive."

The young priest was greatly touched. He went away with a deep and solemn resolve. He saw that he had been selfish. He had been thinking too much of himself and of his own personal appreciation. And he went back determined to keep the fire on the altar burning, even if the fire in his own heart was cold. And it was not long either till the old warmth returned.

I sing the hymn of the conquered, who fell in the battle
of life—

The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who died over-
whelmed in the strife:

Not the jubilant song of the victors, for whom the re-
sounding acclaim
Of nations was lifted in chorus, whose brows wore the
chaplet of fame—
But the hymn of the low and the humble, the weary, the
broken in heart,
Who strove and who failed, acting bravely a silent and
desperate part;
Whose youth bore no flower on its branches, whose
hopes burned in ashes away:
From whose hands slipped the prize they had grasped
at: who stood at the dying of day
With the work of their life all around them, unpitied,
unheeded, alone;
With death swooping down o'er their failure, and all
but their faith overthrown.

Speak, History, who are life's victors? unroll thy long
annals and say—
Are they those whom the world called the victors, who
won the success of a day?
The martyrs, or Nero? the Spartans who fell at Ther-
mopylæ's tryst,
Or the Persians and Xerxes? his judges, or Socrates?
Pilate or Christ?

W. W. Story.

VII

RAINBOWS IN THE MORNING

“ Rainbow in the morning,
Sailors take warning;
Rainbow at night,
Sailors’ delight.”



ONE of the striking things about the Master is that His entrance examinations are so stiff. He never paints rainbows in the morning. He saves His rainbows till the evening. The picture He sketches in the morning is usually dull and drab. It is a bit uncheering and forbidding. He seems to try purposely to dampen enthusiasm. He says the gate is strait, the way narrow. Never once does He veil in the smallest way the hardships of His calling. He wants no follower on false pretenses. He never lowers His standard, never whittles down His terms. We are not to follow Him because it pays, but because it costs.

This certainly is not the usual procedure. The world, for instance, never begins by doing business in that way. Here filed away somewhere among my letters is the prospectus of some new stock venture. I think it is an oil well; no, I

believe it is a gold mine. And the promise is extremely inviting. Some one, by the way, has noted that a gold mine is a hole in the ground owned by a liar. Take the forecast of a Presidential election. How glowing it is! No matter what Daily one reads. Both sides are confident of success. I cannot recall any Presidential election where either party admitted defeat the night before. Or instance some gladiatorial encounter. Who ever heard a pessimistic prediction—well of a prize-fight say? Each side bets on their man. He's going to win sure. He cannot possibly lose. He's younger and stronger and faster. Or he's a harder hitter. He has the punch, the reach, the steam, the stuff, the smash, the wallop. This is the lingo we hear: It is the way of the world I say.

One of the popular appeals in describing the religious life to-day is to picture it as a very simple matter. We have heard so much of the simple Gospel that many are led to think that it is simple in its practical workings and that no great sacrifice is needed. True the cross is there, but largely as an ornament. Or maybe it is wreathed in woodbine. The road is brilliantly lighted. It is a journey of ease and comfort and beautiful outlook along the delectable mountains.

But when Jesus presents His case He paints the dark side. He speaks of the hardships, the likelihood of failure. It is a struggle, a battle,

a martyrdom, a crusade. He seems to be so fearful of over-colouring things that sometimes it almost looks as if He were leaning the other way. The road is rough, the cross is heavy, the wolves are fierce, the sacrifice is great. It is a battle royal to the end. This conflict is not for simpering dandies: it takes a Theodore Roosevelt. The citadel suffers violence and the violent take it by force. In a word, discipleship is a difficult and a daring thing.

“If I find Him if I follow,
What His guerdon here?
Many a sorrow, many a labour,
Many a tear.”

The familiar story of the rich young ruler is one of many illustrations. One is almost startled at the uncompromising attitude taken. Here was a rich young man, clean, wholesome, manly. He had great possessions and to crown all the Master loved him. Surely he must have been a most lovable fellow when it is expressly stated that the Master loved him. Will it not be politic to enlist such an influential recruit? Would it not be tactful to strain matters a bit and make room for such a desirable prize? Think what a sort of Gibraltar his name would be to the new movement. But not so. He is confronted with the most drastic conditions and the young man turned away sorrowful. On another occasion three men heard Him speak, and so moved were

they that they resolved to join His order. To the first He said, "I have not where to lay my head." To the second He said, "Let the dead bury their dead." To the third, "Never mind saying good-bye to your friends, come and follow me."

Yes, the gate to His Kingdom is narrow, but then is not the gate to every kingdom, save the kingdom of darkness, narrow? In the whole wide realm of culture where are the wide gates? The kingdom of learning! What a narrow door it is! And it is never left open. Did not Daniel Webster say, "I have worked more than twelve hours a day for fifty years." The kingdom of art! Think you that door is wide? Read the life of Solon Borglum and be disabused. Did not Ruskin say, "To colour well requires your life, it cannot be done cheaper." The kingdom of letters! Maybe you reckon that door is easy. If so, I would recommend that you read Carlyle's preface to his "French Revolution," and ponder this confession, "This has been the perspiration of my very heart." Where are the kingdoms, I insist, whose gates are wide and free and easy of access? The old Greek apiarist thought to save his bees exertion. So he cut their wings and gathered flowers for them to work upon at home, only to learn that such bees make no honey. Nothing anywhere without agony and strain. Surely if the road to music is lined with thorns

it cannot be possible that the road to character is carpeted with flowers.

One of my own favourite heroes is Epictetus. Who does not admire the old man as he says to his tyrant, "You would cripple me, would you? You would break my arm, would you? You would cut out my tongue, would you? Then cut it out; you cannot touch me." Surely what we need is more of this mettle in the Church. There are many who feel that one trouble with the Church to-day is that we are not making the appeal sufficiently heroic. Our religion is too much simply a matter of dull respectable conventionality. How children love books of adventure! We are always talking about the moral equivalents of war. What are those moral equivalents? Are there any such equivalents? One reason why war in spite of all its horrors still survives, is no doubt because the human heart loves a hero. High ideals never seem so high as when men are willing to die for them. Offer a strong, healthy, young chap ease and he will shake his head and turn away. But point out to him a perilous adventure and his imagination is fired. Even the sports that involve some risk are the popular sports to-day. Perhaps what the Church needs just now more than anything else is persecution. We are not appealing sufficiently to the heroic in men. Christianity has always been popular when it

has meant that one might be put to death for his faith. What was it made the call of the snow so clear and compelling to Captain Scott? It was the romance of hardship, was it not? Instance the late Sir Ernest Shackleton. He proposed a dash across the Antarctic continent and this is how his proposal was received. Let us quote his own words: "I was deluged with applications. One would have thought that a march over snow and ice for more than two thousand miles was the dizziest climax of human happiness." And then he goes on to tell us how millionaires and titled lords offered to wash dishes and scrub decks if he would only take them. Naval men volunteered to resign their commissions if they might only be included in the great "polar party." The London office of the expedition was fairly mobbed by young lads eager for the adventure. Even schoolboys tried to pass themselves off as older than their years. Why, one's blood tingles when one reads the full story of the preparations for the start of this daring navigator: One cannot well help recalling the familiar words of Garibaldi: "Soldiers," said the great captain, "soldiers! What I have to offer you is fatigue, danger, struggle and death; the chill of the cold night in the open air, and heat under the burning sun; no lodges, no munitions, no provisions, but forced marches, dangerous watch-posts, and the continual struggle with the

bayonet against batteries. Those who love freedom and country, follow me.”

Some months ago a brave fireman lost his life fighting a fire here in our city. The chief of the Fire Department in commenting on his death used these words: “Firemen have been killed in this city before, and firemen are being killed in this city right along. The fact is, fighting fire in New York is a dangerous, hazardous business. Now every man in this department knows that. He knew it before he joined the department. Consequently, when he joined this department his act of bravery was already achieved. Anything that follows, even death, is just in the line of the day’s work. This man did not go in there intending to die. He went in to put the fire out—and he died and that is all there is to it.” What a splendid description of the Christian life! To be a soldier is always a strenuous task. And anything that follows is just in line with the day’s work.

The world paints its rainbows in the morning. It gives its best wine at the start. Revivals are not needed to secure volunteers for the broad highway. No urging is needed for that unholy crusade. The gate is wide and open and dazzling and alluring. Drunkenness begins in the social hour, the happy comradeship. The clusters are sweet. At first the wine is red, it adds its colour even to the cup. I think it is the simplest and

sheerest folly to pretend that there are no fascinations in a voluptuous career. There are many fascinations. There is a wild delight in the mad unbridled swing of human passion. The whole Saturnalia is tremendously fascinating.

“The graybeard, Old Wisdom, may boast of his treasures,
Give me with gay Folly to live;
I grant him his calm-blooded, time-settled pleasures,
But Folly has raptures to give.”

Tremendously fascinating, but its fascinations are all in the morning. Toward evening the colours fade; soon they fade away. The draught gets insipid to the taste, then flat, then bitter. And in the end it bites, bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.

VIII

RAINBOWS AT NIGHT



HERE are three or four pictures flung on the Bible canvas that for sheer emotion stand out in literature unrivalled. One is the beautiful story of Ruth and Naomi. Another is David's elegy over Absalom. Who can read this immortal lament for the first time, or for that matter the hundred and first, without his pulse beating faster? Still another is the exposure where Joseph makes himself known to his brethren. But perhaps one of the most genuinely affecting in the whole record is that scene in which the Apostle is bidding good-bye to the elders at Ephesus. The great leader is completing his labours. He is within hail of the end. He is calling them to witness that he has kept back nothing that was profitable. He looks back on his ministry with conscious and confident approval, and then glances forward to the hills which his feet were soon to tread. He is not sure just what dark waters he may yet have to cross before he scales those shining peaks. But that matters not; that is not material. He is

prepared for the worst if the worst is to be his. He reminds one of that seal adopted by one of our Missionary Boards, in which an ox is depicted standing meekly between a plow and an altar, while underneath are the words, "Ready for either." The Apostle is ready for either. He would like to go and he would like to stay. He cannot decide which is preferable. The only thing that causes him anxiety is that he might be certain of finishing his course with joy, and of going out and up with flying colours.

There is a story by a living novelist. It is the story of a young Englishman who was starting out on a political career. He was gifted and clever but lacking in the backbone of a strong conviction. One day he is talking over his plans with his fiancée. She has a higher and a nobler outlook on life than her lover, and in the course of her conversation she drops the remark, "It seems to me that no work is really worth doing at all except the work which has a beautiful rainbow-dream at its heart." This quiet observation describes the Apostle exactly. He had a beautiful rainbow-dream in his heart, a dream of splendour. For this dream he sacrificed all things. For this dream he lived and laboured. Nothing else counted; nothing else mattered. And the dream was the joy set before him. The joy of being able to say at the close that he had never flinched, that he had been true to the great

passion of his ministry. "For none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me; indeed I set no value at all on my life as compared with the joy of finishing my course."

To be sure the Apostle does not mean to intimate that he expected to finish his work. Because no one ever does that. It matters not how successful the career, unfinished must always be written across its pages. No true man ever attains to more than a small part of what he aims at. Night always falls before one gets the final touches on. Thorwaldsen began his greatest group but he never finished it. Matthew Henry worked for years on his commentary but he only got as far as the book of Acts. Charles Dickens is busy with *Edwin Drood*. It was to have been given to the printer in twelve monthly parts, but only six were contributed when the summons came. Henry Buckle writes his great work "*The History of Civilization*." He published the first volume and then goes travelling to gather material for the second. He is seized with fever in the Holy Land and dies at Damascus, talking all the time in his delirium about his almost completed monumental work. "Oh, my book, my book. I shall never finish my book." We draw the plans and specifications and make the blueprints perhaps, and sometimes we see construction started, but as a rule some one else steps

in to top off the structure. Moses was not permitted to enter the promised land. Livingstone died with the great dream of his heart unrealized, the open sore of the world unhealed. Hudson Taylor only had time to pluck a few jewels from the great shore of human wreckage. Sir Walter Scott was one of the bravest soldiers that ever buckled on armour and the closing chapter of his life is most pathetic. He had been ill but was recovering, and during his convalescence he had marked out for himself a great program. "Take me to my room and fetch the keys of my desk," he said to his daughter one morning. The daughter went into the study and arranged his desk, wheeling him later in his chair to the old familiar spot where *Waverley* had been written. "Now give me my pen, and leave me here for a little to myself." His daughter put the pen into his hand, and he endeavoured to close his fingers on it, but they refused their office. It dropped on the paper. He sank back upon his pillows, silent tears rolling down his cheeks. But composing himself, by and by, he was taken out of doors, where he dropped into slumber. When he was awakening Laidlaw said to him, "Sir Walter has had a little repose." The tears again rushed to his eyes. "Friends," said he, "don't let me expose myself. Get me to bed. That's the only place."

So let us repeat it over and over and keep on

repeating: nothing down here is ever finished. It is a world of rudiments and first sketches. Even the world itself is never finished. The rocks, the trees, the caves, the cañons, how lacking they all are in what the artist calls finish. Did you say the mountain is finished? Why, its very shape is being altered every passing year. Did you say the prairie is finished? It is not so very long ago that the site of our vast city was a pasture field. Up yonder was a grove of trees, with birds singing in the branches. Then came the axe of the woodman and then the plow of the farmer and the saw of the carpenter and then the cottage and then the store and then the skyscraper. Truly we live in an unfinished world. The old idea that the Creator flung out this mighty cosmos in perfect form and then retired forever, is dismissed to-day as idle stuff. With a wider knowledge has come a more reasonable view. The world is never finished; it is in process of evolution. The statement that man was made in the divine likeness is prophecy not history. God made the world and He is toiling still at the task. Some one has said that it would be a good thing if the first verse of Genesis had been separated from the other verses and labelled Chapter I, so leaving enough millions of years between the first verse and the second to satisfy any Fundamentalist or Modernist. As Joaquin Miller says in his poem on Alaska:

“Hear the avalanche hurled
Down this unfinished world.”

But if our work is never finished, our course is. It must be borne in mind that this word finish has two meanings. There is a vast difference between perfecting a task and getting to the end of it. Many are getting to the end of the march. To some the roar of the ocean is already distinct. They can hear the sound of the breakers. A great agnostic recently remarked, “This world seems to be a very good place if it would only last.” What a bitter-sweet sort of sentence that is! “If it would only last!” As rare Samuel Rutherford puts it, “Build your nest on no tree in this world; the whole forest has been sold over to death.” Death is the merciless mortgagee who eventually forecloses on us all.

But to get to the end of the long struggle triumphantly! To look back with satisfaction and then forward with hope. To near the goal in the spirit of rejoicing! To see rainbows at night! Rainbows in the morning are beautiful but nothing like rainbows at night. Paul was a happy pilgrim, and his happiness increased as he neared the goal. His letter to the Philippians, written within sight of the end, is a perfect burst of gladness; in its four short chapters he uses the word joy sixteen times. This is one reason for the charm of George Frederick Watts. He is a prophet of joy and hope

in the eventide. The artists usually portray Time as an old man, tired and decrepit and sinking into senility and decay. But in Watts' great picture, Time is represented as a youth of energy and dash and vigour. His hair is blown back from his face, his eyes are glittering with gladness, he has a banner in his hand, and he is looking out across the fields in the morning of life. The picture is characteristic and it is true. Time ought never to be old. Time is young and strong and charged with vitality.

In his address recently delivered before St. Andrew's University Sir James Barrie read a letter which he had received from Captain Scott shortly before he died. The letter was written in the Antarctic tent where his body and those of his gallant comrades were latterly found. It begins: "We are pegging out in a very comfortless spot. Hoping this letter may be found and sent to you, I write you a word of farewell. I want you to think well of me and of my end. Good-bye—I am not at all afraid of the end but sad to miss many a simple pleasure which I had planned for the future in our long marches. We are in a desperate state—feet frozen, no fuel and a long way from food, but it would do your heart good to be in our tent, to hear our songs and our cheery conversation. We are very near the end. We did intend to finish ourselves

when things proved like this, but we have decided to die naturally without." There is at least one immortal sentence in that letter, "Their songs and cheery conversation." The story is a great one: it stirs the blood, it gives the spinal chill. But it is not one whit greater than many another.

Here is Henry Drummond. His was a very notable and a very wonderful career. He was one of the real heroes of the century. He died when he was only forty-six. His story has been given to us by his college classmate and lifelong friend George Adam Smith. In this tender and touching tribute Sir George shows us what a record of toil and labour and sacrifice it was, how he gave himself unsparingly to the cause of truth and human betterment. Then he relates the lingering years of suffering, how with shattered nerves and whitened hair he met the inevitable. He knew the end was not far off. He knew his race was nearly run. He was bidding good-bye to a world in which he had played a star part. He was leaving a host of friends who loved him. He suffered excruciating pain, but all through those months of torture he kept his smile and his cheerfulness and his love of fun and his simple trust, and at last passed on into the silence with a Jubilate on his lips. Isn't that great, too? Really is the Antarctic tale any greater?

The Apostle himself is our shining example. He wished to die in the harness, with the tide high and full and peaceful. He wished no moaning of the bar when he put out to sea. One cannot but feel that it is the ideal way to answer the call. For after all, the greatest joy that one can find is the joy that comes from the exercise of our full powers in doing faithful, honest, loving work. There is a book called "Little Ann," and in it there is a story of a miller. All his life long he had been just a miller and his home was close to the dam. When the call came, they stopped the mill lest the noise might disturb him. But in the morning he was restless. He could not speak, but he kept pointing to the dam. They were puzzled to know what he meant, until one of the workmen turned on the flume, and started the great wheel again with its creaking machinery. Then the old miller turned over and fell asleep. There is a lesson in that for us. The lesson is to find joy in our work, to find the music of life in the mill wheel. The great thing is to sing doing one's daily task. I recall the story of a soldier boy who was wounded. When they carried him into the hospital he was whistling a song. The nurse said to him, "I guess the pain is much better, isn't it?" "No," he answered, "but I cannot stand it any other way." I like to read the life of Cowper. When he was an old man and knew

his time was short, he asked one day to be carried into his library. There he went from shelf to shelf, taking down some of the old favourite authors and saying good-bye to them. He picked up his Milton and his Addison and his Sophocles and glanced through them, and then putting them back in their places, he whispered, "Good-bye, old friends, you have been wise teachers to me."

A traveller in Japan paused before a worker in ivory and watched him carve an exquisite figure. "Are you not sorry to part with this when it's finished?" he asked. "No, I expect the next will be better," came the answer. George Matheson says that every schoolboy studies his lessons not in the light of the lamp but in the light of the coming holiday. He means that we live by our expectations.

"I wish there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches,
And all of our selfish grief,
Could be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door,
And never put on again.

"I wish we could come on it all unaware,
Like the hunter who finds a lost trail;
I wish that the one whom our blindness had done
The greatest injustice of all
Could be at the gates like an old friend that waits
For the comrade he's gladdest to hail.

"We could find all the things we intended to do
But forgot and remembered—too late:
Little praises unspoken, little promises broken,

And all of the thousand and one
Little duties neglected that might have perfected
The day for one less fortunate.

“It couldn't be possible not to be kind
In the Land of Beginning Again,
And the ones we misjudged and the ones whom
we grudged
Their moments of victory here
Would find in the grasp of our loving clasp
More than penitent lips could explain.

“For what had been hardest we'd know has been
best,
And what had seemed loss would be gain;
For there isn't a sting that will not take wing
When we've freed it and laughed it away;
And I think that the laughter is most what we're
after,
In the Land of Beginning Again.

“So I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning Again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches,
And all our poor selfish grief
Could be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door
And never put on again.”

IX

THE DEVIL OF FEAR



HERE is a command in the Old Version of the Good Book that bids us "take no thought for the morrow," but when we get down to real business it turns out to be a very puzzling piece of advice. Because we see all about us that the people who follow this injunction are nearly always no good. They're triflers, loafers, drones, every one of them. The savage of the South Seas sitting under his banana tree smoking his gagroot may follow this direction, but it certainly is not the sign-board for earnest, serious men. No wise husband would advise such a policy, no insurance company would recommend it, no business corporation would act upon it, no statesman would incorporate it into his platform, no chancellor into his budget. No admiral or general would consider it seriously for one little moment in his plan of naval or military strategy. The very glory of our civilization is in taking thought, taking thought for to-morrow, taking thought for all the to-morrows, taking thought for the time when there will be no to-morrow.

Because eternity is timeless and to-morrowless and we are to take ceaseless thought for that. The secret of all successful men belies any such foolish counsel. Think of Bancroft spending six and twenty years on his history. Think of Gibbon putting a full score of years into his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Witness Titian giving seven long years to his Last Supper! Or Leonardo toiling for four years on the head of Mona Lisa. Or instance George Eliot reading a thousand volumes before she finished Daniel Deronda. Taking thought has done all these things, taking very strenuous thought, taking very laborious thought. The man who takes no thought is not only an idler, he is a downright sinner. Some one has said that the world's failure to-day is more intellectual than moral, meaning thereby that evil is wrought more by want of thought than by want of heart. Thoughtlessness is one of the classic sins of the age.

Of course the command is simple as rain on cherry blossoms when we read it right. It means that we are to take no anxious thought, and, as Kipling says, that is another story. "Take no anxious thought for to-morrow." To-morrow will bring its own anxieties, so do not anticipate them. Sufficient for each day are its own distracting cares. Do not overload to-day with the burdens of to-morrow. To-morrow will bring its

own weary load. Do you recall the story of the *Royal George*? She was a great battleship but she turned turtle in the harbour at Spithead and went down with her commander and eight hundred of her crew. And the tragedy was caused by the shifting of her guns. Too much weight was put on her port side, and over went this splendid man-of-war. It is a symbol of many a wreckage in life. Too much weight at one point has toppled over many a noble craft.

I doubt if there is a sin in the decalogue as common as worry. Some one insists that worry has slain more victims than war; another says more even than disease. We all try to avoid wrinkles on the body, but how many of us have deep ugly creases on our souls. Sometimes I say to my child, "My dear, don't frown. Every time you frown it leaves behind a little wrinkle." But we need to be reminded that the soul can frown too. What are some of the things that cause the soul to frown?

Well, there is *covetousness*. Men are covetous. How many have the frown of covetousness on their faces! Covetousness is an inordinate desire to obtain and possess things. There is a passion in the most of us to pile up a great mass of worldly stuff, and as a rule the only thing it brings is anxiety. It never brings peace of mind; it almost invariably brings the opposite. It never contributes to the real secret of life.

“Take heed and beware of covetousness,” says the Master, “for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Mr. Hornaday tells us in his recent book “The Minds and Manners of Wild Animals,” that the beavers out here in the park, although they are fed every day and have nothing to fear as far as hunger is concerned, yet the instinct of winter storage is so strong in them that they will take half their food allowance and hide it away in some little corner of their winter habitation. It is a good deal like that with us. We have such a tenacious and deep-seated conviction that it is the things that are material that are the worth-while things; the moral and spiritual values are secondary; the claims of the body stand first. And so it happens that a life based on this belief tends to covetousness and avarice and grasping bodily indulgence. Of course it follows that such a life is the slave of anxiety and solicitude and carping care. “The honey, alas, does not always pay for the sting.”

It isn’t wrong to take thought, let us insist. The whole point is, what are we to take thought about? Take thought about your work: take thought about your ways: take thought about your good name: take thought about doing your duty. But take no thought about your life. Your life is God’s business. He will attend to that. Take thought about the doing well of your

daily task, about fulfilling the will of your Father. God will feed you and clothe you and protect you. You need have no worry along that line. He will provide. If you doubt that you doubt Him.

Then there is *Fear*. How many have made themselves positively ugly with the frown of Fear! And what a really dreadful thing is fear. Tell me what a man fears and I will tell you what he is. Fear is the master enemy of the soul. There is no devil like the devil of Fear. And what multitudes are ruled by this tyrant! Galsworthy in one of his dramas says: "Perhaps the greater part of the misery of the human race comes not from the actual presence of trouble, but from the dread of it." What a world this would be if fear were driven out of it! Fear is one of the basest passions of the human soul. The greatest weakness in most lives is fear. When a man is fearful his gift of reasoning is clouded, his nerve is unsteady, his vision is obscured; he loses all power of sober and sane and quick decision. Fear, furthermore, predisposes to the very danger we are trying to avoid. The fear of a thing is not infrequently the cause of it. The man who is afraid of catching cold is usually the first man to catch cold. And unfortunately the alarmist is always with us to sound the signal and start the stampede. He is always nosing danger. He is always piling up

mountains. He is always anticipating trouble. "The tomato causes cancer, the daffodil spreads influenza, flowers should not be permitted in the sick room. There is peril even in the communion cup." William James says, "If you are walking through a forest and get afraid and start to run, every tree will run after you, but if you stand and hold your ground every tree will become your friend." George Herbert in his fascinating volume "The Country Parson" has the same wholesome bit of advice. "If you are going through a cemetery," he says, "and think you see a ghost, go right up and speak to it. You will likely find that instead of being a ghost it is nothing but a sheet hung out to dry." Or as a friend of mine learned when he found himself in a similar plight, and boldly turned round and faced the fearful thing, it was nothing but a white cow lying down and ruminating.

The great trouble with fear is that it destroys calm and sober thinking. When a man fears he is more or less panicky. And when one is panicky he is almost certain to do something foolish. There is an expression in golf called pressing. It means that the player is trying to force things; he is getting anxious; he is trying for distance. The moment a golfer begins to press it's all up with him. Some one remarks that in all departments of life we should learn not to press. Pressing is always fatal. It always lands you in

a bunker and life's links are full of bunkers. It puts you in a fluster. It destroys serenity and calm and coördination and timing.

How pitifully prevalent to-day is fear! Listen to this writer in a recent issue of *Herbert's Journal*: "The civilized world at present seems to many of us to be living, as it were, under a cloud. Its dominant mood is that of unhappiness, depression, unrest. It is obsessed by anxieties and suspicions, uncertain of its hold on life. It has forgotten joy. Like a neurotic, whose sickness has no name, and few definite symptoms beyond general uneasiness and lack of hope, it is incapable of the existence which it feels to be wholesome and complete. Impotent and uncertain of aim, full of conflicts it cannot resolve, society is becoming more and more querulous, less and less reasonable." This writer goes on to argue that it was fear that caused the war. England feared the military expansion of Germany. Germany feared the commercial supremacy of England. And this led on to increasing and ever increasing armaments, piling up great monuments of destruction and torture. And the same game is still being played. We are hearing once more the same old bluster and brag about military preëminence. We are told it is a necessary insurance. Mark the stark coolness of the claim. Insurance forsooth. Why insurance? Where does the insurance come in?

Certainly not insurance against! For insurance never prevented a fire. Insurance aims to make good the loss, that is all. Insurance never prevents. Insurance only restores. When one's house burns down one realizes what a wise thing it was to have it insured. But when a world burns down, who is going to make good that loss? Insurance never prevented fire. Insurance never prevented anything.

The same game, I repeat, is still being played. Why must it be? Why must every nation keep on at the same old, mad, imbecile business? It is fear, is it not? Every nation fears its neighbour as a potential foe. Fear breeds suspicion. Fear sees an enemy in a rival. Fear begets envy, ill-will, hatred, murder. Fear is the forerunner of war. It may camouflage as patriotism, but there's no patriotism about it. Real, genuine patriotism is afraid of nothing but injustice and unrighteousness and wrong. It is pure and simple fear.

Then think of all the *distrust* there is in our hearts. After all, the great reason for most of our anxiety is because we lack trust. To-day has burdens enough of its own. Why pile to-morrow on its back? Worrying over to-morrow is a heathenish practice. "After all these things do the heathen seek." Once upon a time there lived a man and he never knew what care meant, because he lived a life of perfect trust. The

true man labours for results that he will never see himself. If he felt that to-morrow would fail him, why the very nerve of his spirit would be cut. It is for the future that he lives. Man at his best is a prophet, a seer. He sees that which is invisible. "Be not over-anxious about worldly things." And some have interpreted that as meaning that we are to think so much about heavenly things that the things of earth may be neglected. But this is to entirely miss the point. As long as I am in this world I am to exercise whatever little cunning I may have of hand and brain and industry. I have a family to support and a home to protect. To be lax and loose in doing my work, to be careless about paying my debts, to be slipshod in carrying on my business, is not to be honouring God. Some one says: "He who does not do his duty in this world will not do his duty in any world." If a man is not interested in the city in which he lives, in its welfare, in its beauty and cleanliness, what reason have we to expect that he is going to be greatly interested in the City of God? To shirk one's privilege as a citizen is a dastardly and ignoble thing. This is not what the Master means at all. To do our full duty on earth is the very best preparation possible for the heavenly life.

And anyway the simple fact is, we ought to trust because in its last analysis, we have very

little to do with the greatest things in our lives. The great things have all been decided for us. The age in which I was to live, nobody asked my wishes about that. I should like to have lived in the days of Pericles and Plato. I should like to have walked the streets of Rome in the time of her imposing glory. I would not mind having been a playmate of Shakespeare's and having fished with him along the banks of the Avon. Who my father or mother was to be, what colour I would select for my skin, I was not asked about any of these things. I was not consulted in regard to my personal appearance. If I had been, no doubt I, as Bernard Shaw says, would have had some improvements to suggest. These things were all settled for us. A friend once expressed surprise to C. P. Huntington that he was able to accomplish so much. "You must work very hard," he remarked. "Not at all," was the reply, "I work easy." Is there not a great truth there? The art of life is to find joy in our work and so work easy. If our work becomes hard, it is because there is anxiety and friction. Then work becomes a grind. How smoothly machinery runs when it is oiled! There is no friction like fear; there is no lubricant like trust. Sometimes we are asked the secret of the power of Christian Science. Christian Science has delivered scores of people from their fears. This is the secret. There can

be no doubt of it. Men and women that have worried themselves sick over their health and their fortunes, and their children's health, and their futures and fortunes, have learned that it is not necessary for any human soul in this world to worry. Christian Science has taught us all a great and precious lesson. If we believe that God is watching over us, why should we fear? He knows the way. He holds the key. He will stand by us to the end.

“Motives are seeds
From which at times spring deeds
Not equal to the soul's outreaching hope.
Strive for the stars!
Count not well done but best!
Then, with brave patience, leave the rest
To Him who knows.
He'll judge you justly ere the record close.”

X

THE RELIGION THAT EVERYBODY BELIEVES



HERE is a religion that everybody believes and perhaps at first sight it may seem strange to some to say that it is the Christian religion. But this is our challenge. When the Christian religion is rightly stated everybody believes in it. An honest unbeliever is unthinkable. Not all are ready to accept the Christian faith but all do accept the Christian religion. Is this possible? Can the one be without the other? Can we have the soul without the body? Well, that question we will not now entertain. To quote the poet again, it is another story. But if religion is a life, then the Christian religion is nothing more nor less than the Christian life, the life as it was lived by Christ Himself. This was simply and splendidly stated one day by Peter. He was talking of Jesus of Nazareth and he put the Man's biography into one pregnant sentence, "He went about doing good." Christ's whole earthly life was spent in doing good, in healing disease, in destroying the works of dark-

ness, in striving to repair the broken order. It was His very meat and drink. And it is the task to which He summons every one who calls himself His follower. This is the religion that everybody believes.

There are some things about the Lord Jesus that cannot be doubted, and they cannot be doubted because they are not articles of faith but statements of fact. This is one of them. Some may doubt the inspiration of the Bible; they may question the historical accuracy of the four Evangelists; they may even go to the very extreme and doubt whether such a person as the Man of Nazareth ever lived. But, historical or mythical, they cannot question this, that He is the one great supreme spiritual force on this earth at this present time.

Every question has two sides, we say, but not this. This question has only one side. Some may find it difficult to credit that He went about doing good nineteen hundred years ago, but they cannot challenge the fact that He is going about doing good to-day. There is no room for controversy on this point. The influence of Jesus in the world to-day is unmistakable. That is not a question of faith, but of sight; it is a matter of simple observation. His spirit is at work in the world, or if you prefer to call it—His influence. And it has grown with the years. Other forces have come and gone, but Jesus abides.

His empire is greater to-day than ever. He is the unquestioned leader to-day of the world's spiritual troops.

This, let us insist, is not debatable. We may believe what we please about His birth or His baptism or His divinity or His miracles or His transfiguration or His claims or His death or even His resurrection, but the fact of His spiritual power and its manifestation in the world is not dependent on any dogma; it is here to be reckoned with, dogma or no dogma. It is a fact that cannot be disputed; it is a challenge that cannot be gainsaid; it is a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

The really vital point then is this matter of reproducing this imprint of the Man. Jesus went about doing good, and He went about it in very simple ways. He never laboured to do anything great or brilliant. He was not in the least theatrical. His life consisted mostly of numberless little things. It was largely a matter of personal touch and intimate conversations and helpful kindnesses. There was nothing showy or dramatic or pretentious in His public ministry. The only really spectacular triumph He won was on the Mount of Transfiguration, and there were only three with Him at the time. It was a life dedicated to life's daily common tasks.

And it is not otherwise with us, at least with most of us. As He was in the world, so are we.

God may not be calling us to any great eventful exploit, but there's not one of us, however disadvantaged, that cannot be doing good in a legion of little ways. If God wanted His children to move mountains He would have put some colossal mountain-moving equipment into their hands, and planted them down at the foot of some giant peak and said, "Now go ahead and move it." But He hasn't done that; the most of us cannot move mountains; the most of us don't amount to much when it comes to shifting mountains. Only this reminder: It is the little things in life that are the great things. It is the little things that really count. We read the other day of a great, stalwart tree out in Colorado. It is 400 years old. It was a sapling when Columbus landed on San Salvador. It has been struck by lightning fourteen times. It has braved the storms of four centuries. But in the end beetles killed it. It is the little things in life that are the really important things.

There are many who feel that the supreme call to-day is for a definition of true religion in the language of service. If I were drawing up a catechism I think I should have as the first question, "What is the chief end of man?" And I think my answer would be, "The chief end of man is to glorify God by going about doing good."

"Religion," as Professor Rauschenbush once

put it, "has spent a large part of its time in sacrificing, in praying, in travelling to Mecca and Jerusalem and Rome, in kissing sacred stones, bathing in sacred rivers, climbing sacred stairs, and a thousand other things of like kind." But the way that Jesus computed religion was in seeing how much good you can do. It is not a book to be read or a system of truth to be discussed or a catechism to be memorized; it is not a philosophy to be argued about nor a scientific theory to be proven; it is a life of goodness to be lived. The great majority of people are not interested in scientific books on botany but they will go miles to see a dahlia display. When Burbank assembles his facts and puts them into a beautiful orchid, everybody stands and admires; and when we take the great truths of the Christian faith and incorporate them into a beautiful life, even the unbeliever sits up and takes notice.

Of course the essential thing is to have the Christ-spirit. I do not think it is possible to even feebly repeat the Christ life without having in some measure His mind, His passion, His love. There is a book on roses written by Dean Hole, and the very first sentence in the book is a striking one. This is the sentence: "He who would have beautiful roses in his garden must first have beautiful roses in his heart." Paul says that good works are not acceptable without

faith. He means by that that the motive of the heart must be taken into account. It is possible to go about doing good for purely selfish reasons. A man may do good simply to gain the esteem of his fellow men. He may do good because it is a wise thing to do from a business standpoint. He may give largely to charity just to get his name into the papers. It is possible to be generous and gracious and yet to have a mind filled with meanness. It is possible to be very religious and yet to have precious little religion. So it all comes back to the question, Are we doing good in the spirit of Christ? "If a man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." That is fundamental. Have we the mind of our Master? Have we His Spirit? If we have, we have everything; if we have not, we have nothing. "It takes the spirit of Livingstone to do Livingstone's work." Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not the spirit of Christ, I am only elocutionizing. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and have not the spirit of Christ, I am only advertising. Though I even give my body to be burned and have not the spirit of Christ it becomes of no possible avail; I'm only a fanatic. If I pay regularly for my pew rent in church, and then some fine morning lose my temper and get cross at the ushers because some poor lonely wayfarer stumbled in and took

my seat, I have not the spirit of Christ. If I had I would be overjoyed to welcome a stranger to the place of prayer. A church without His spirit is not a church of Christ. A church that is unbrotherly is not a church of Christ. A church that is cold and snobbish is not a church of Christ. It is only a federation of the Evil One. When it comes to religion some Christians have very cutting tongues and very sharp claws. They love their own denomination but they hate Unitarians. They say very bitter things about Catholicism. They ridicule and make gay sport of Christian Science. But this surely is not the spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of loving kindness. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another."

This is not saying that it does not matter what He taught. It does matter what He taught. But it matters infinitely more how He lived. And He lived in such a way as to teach us that love was the only thing worth living for. If we have love we have everything; if we have not love we have nothing. We speak of the Sabbath Day as holy. We say, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." But what is it makes a day holy? Does shutting up my store and giving my clerks a day off each week—does that make a day holy? Does going to church simply because it is the proper thing to do make a day holy? Does

singing hymns make a day holy? Does putting on a new suit of clothes and shining my shoes make a day holy? No day is holy unless I fill it with deeds of sincere worship and loving service. Divine service consists in making service divine. An hour on Monday helping some poor fellow-mortal is far holier than any Sunday spent in indolence. "It is the deed that sanctifies the day, not the day the deed." And the character of a deed depends upon the spirit in which it is performed.

There are lots of people, and thousands of them professing Christians, to whom religion is purely a selfish matter. They want its seal and approval in the hour of joy; they crave its peace and comfort in the day of trouble; they desire its consolation, its promise of forgiveness in the time of penitence. They ask too its inspiration and the uplift of its worship, its hymns, its sacraments, its fellowship. They want its teachings, its instruction, its ideals of heavenly wisdom. And then, and more particularly, when the bell rings and school is out, they want a home to go to—a heavenly home, a "home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In a word, religion to them is a selfish consideration. They never link up their church-going with any form of service. "They do not want their comfortable schedule of life disturbed." The whole matter is a sort of insurance policy for this

world and the next. They are bargain hunters pure and simple.

Then on the other hand if some are too selfish to do any definite work, others are too consequential. They lack the spirit of humility. They always demand a prominent place. They will not serve on any committee unless they are chairman. I have known instances where people were asked to help in some particular task, and when they consented they gave the impression that the cause was receiving a great favour. The Psalmist says, "I am willing to be a doorkeeper in the House of the Lord." That's the spirit of Christ—to be even a doorkeeper.

This then is the religion that everybody believes. When our faith is thus stated there are no infidels. Infidelity cannot thrive in this ozone. We spend much time in worship but the important thing is, how does our worship express itself? Worship is good but service is better. Does our worship show itself in some definite reform? No earnest person can give any valid excuse for idleness these troubled days. There's a commission for everybody. We are always hearing the cry of the unemployed but there need be no Christian unemployed. Say not you can do nothing. If we think we can do nothing that is what we will do. Let us have faith to believe we can do something. You say, I read my Bible; I say my prayers; I go to

church; I take communion. So far, good. This is the way to renew our strength and confirm our faith. But when strength is renewed and faith confirmed, what are we going to do with them? "If a man is really good he should be doing some real good." He that doeth righteousness is righteous. Many label themselves Christians but to-day, unfortunately, that may not mean much. Are we Christians with the apostolic spirit? Is there a light about us or is it mostly smoke? The noblest question any one can ask himself in this world is this, "What good can I do?" That is a beautiful prayer which the old Huguenots had in their liturgy, "Oh God, grant that this day I may be useful to some one." There is a story told of Sir Bartle Frere, at one time Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. He was coming to visit a Scotch home. The master sent one of his servants to meet him at the depot. And this is how he was to recognize him: "When the train comes in just look for a tall gentleman helping somebody."

And this is the spirit the age is clamouring for—the spirit of helpfulness and service. And it is the only way to enjoy our corporate life. We only get out of any fellowship what we put into it. If we put nothing in, we will get nothing out. If we put little in, we will get little out. If we put much in we will get much out. A magnet only keeps its power when given some-

thing to do. If you hang a magnet where it cannot touch other pieces of metal it will deteriorate and lose its strength. Even a magnet must expend itself if it would retain its secret. Wine can be bottled up in the cellar and it will get richer all the while. But not so religion. To keep the faith is to daily live it. Like a sword it loses its edge if never used, it rusts if laid aside. Religion is raising one hand *up* and holding the other *out*. George Eliot speaks of "those immortal dead who live again in lives made better by their presence."

And then how little it takes sometimes to make a weary world sing! Some one observes that the best way to kindle a smile is to smile. Kindness is not a deposit like an oil well which shows signs of petering out. It is an inexhaustible supply. Scientists speak of the conservation of energy, but there is no conservation of goodness. We can add to the treasury every morning. Never a day passes but we can increase the reserve. Stevenson has a little poem:

"If I have faltered more or less in my great task of
happiness,
If I have moved among my race and shown no
glorious morning face,
If beams from happy human eyes have moved me
not, if morning skies,
Books, and my food and summer rain knocked on
my sullen heart in vain;
Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take and stab my
spirit broad awake."

For all the people who sang for us when the day was dark, for all who helped us when the load was heavy—for all such we say, Hallelujah.

We are hearing much to-day about evolution and its all sufficiency to solve the mysteries of life. There is no question that evolution accounts for many things. It interprets the structure and growth of the human body; it throws not a little light on the development of the human mind; it explains man's keenness, his cunning, his cleverness and all those qualities that make for what the world calls success. But there are other things it is powerless to determine. It is helpless for instance to account for the virtues that have no value in the world's markets; it can make nothing at all of love and kindness and gentleness and the spirit of unselfishness; it has no answer to make to the question, Why should one be willing to die for the sake of his convictions? The history of the Church, unfortunately, is largely a history of doctrines. Theologians have wasted gallons of ink writing creeds. Sometimes the hair-splitting definitions are most confusing and bewildering. But what use is any creed if it lacks the spirit of its Archetype? The best test of a book is not who wrote it but has it the breath of the eternal in it. A man may be as orthodox—well, John Wesley says, as the devil—and as unspiritual. He may go through all the forms of religion and mumble

all its paternosters as punctiliously and devoutly as a faithful visitor to the Vatican and still be at heart a stranger to the truth. Religion is not believing that there is only one Isaiah. It is just as religious to believe in two or three or six Isaiahs as to believe in only one. Religion is not a question of Isaiahs at all. Religion is not believing that the book of Jonah is historical. It is just as religious to believe that the book is allegorical, and that the idea is to represent Nineveh as swallowing up little Israel, as to believe in its verbal veracity. Religion has nothing to do with these questions. They are questions of science, of history, of criticism. Religion is to fear God and keep His commandments. Religion is to be kind and merciful and forgiving. Religion is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. Religion is to love one's neighbour as oneself. When we stand before the great bar above we are not going to be judged by our creeds but by our kindness. Did we feed the hungry? Did we clothe the naked? Did we go about doing good? Religion is a life not a dogma, not a dead tradition; it is a power in the soul, not a formula.

I recall the story of a printer. He was setting up in type a sermon. And coming across the expression ethical Christianity, he mistook it for ethereal Christianity. Alas there are many such typical blunders. This is not assuming that

there is too much Christianity of the ethereal kind but it is saying that there is not nearly enough of the ethical stamp. Behind the great shaft of Nelson in Trafalgar Square, much more modest but much more important to-day, there is the statue of Edith Cavell. She died with a sentence on her lips which will probably live as long as Lord Nelson's immortal utterance. Nelson said "England expects every man to do his duty" and it was a noble saying. But Miss Cavell said, "I perceive that patriotism is not enough . . . there is something better than patriotism: it is the love of humanity, it is the love of man." We all know Mark Pattison, that rare and brilliant genius. But how few are familiar with the story of his sister—Sister Dora as she was called. Many consider that she did a greater work than her brilliant brother. She was a nurse in one of the English hospitals. And when at night she would lie down to snatch a few hours' rest and some patient would ring the bell, she would jump up whispering to herself, "The Master is come and calleth for me." It is thus that the great souls of the world hear the cry of need.

Charity is a lovely virtue but not the loveliest. Giving money to those in need is good but it is not a distinctly Christian grace. Pliny the Roman orator bestowed great sums of money on the poor, as did also Cyrus and Cicero and Mark

Antony and Julius Cæsar. Almost as far back as history goes we have these noble instances of generosity. One of the difficulties with organized charity to-day is that it lacks the personal touch and does its work by proxy. It is a splendid thing to give a check but better far to give oneself. The camelia can never be made as popular as the rose. It is just as beautiful but it is cold and odourless. Religion asks for a little slice of a man's time as well as his money. It calls not only for my secretary: it calls for myself, for a little of the warmth of my heart. The whole root of the trouble to-day that separates class from class is lack of sympathy. The rich are often heartless because they do not know what it is to be poor: the strong are often pitiless because they do not know what it is to be weak. This is not belittling the gifts of the generous. That would be a very short-sighted and unscriptural thing to do. For are we not told that "God loveth a cheerful giver"? Some one speaks of the romance of money. He means that you can send your dollars flying round the world touching millions of lives, feeding hungry children, healing sick babies, and bringing back glorious dividends of human joy. You can go down here to the bank and cable help to almost any part of the world. Isn't that romantic? "The greenback in your hand may become one of the green leaves of the tree of life." Do not

call it filthy. It is not filthy unless we make it filthy. It may be as clean and pure and sweet as the white surplice which the angels wear. Truly indeed money is romantic. And oftentimes it is an acid test. The warning is, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Some one has observed that the man who will not give anything to hospitals deserves some day to be found in one. Only remember again that though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and lack love for them, I am nothing.

Mr. A. C. Benson has a book which he calls "The Gate of Death." He had had a very severe fall and for weeks hovered round the border line. His life was despaired of and he was given the sacraments of the Church. But he recovered and during his convalescence he began to write down the thoughts he had been having during that critical time. And now I quote: "I did not care for my personal successes. I cared nothing for the little position I had achieved, nothing for the books I had written. I did not even care to think that I had, however feebly, tried to serve the will of God. What I did care about was the thought that I had made a few people happier, that I had done a few kindnesses, that I had won some love." Well, when we all come to the crisis I wonder what will be the pride of our life? Can any one doubt that it will be much the same? I sometimes think

118 Religion That Everybody Believes

the records of heaven will be most unusual reading. The brilliant things will be there of course—the dash over the top, the hero on the sinking ship, the martyr at the stake. But so will the cup of cold water and the visit to the sick bed or the smile to the stranger. That gold at the foot of the rainbow is a mirage. It is the gold at our feet that is real.

“Ragged, uncomely, and old and gray,
A woman walked in a Northern town,
And through the crowd as she wound her way
One saw her loiter and then stoop down,
Putting something away in her old torn gown.

“‘You are hiding a jewel,’ the watcher said.
(Ah that was her heart—had the truth been read)
‘What have you stolen?’ he asked again.
Then the dim eyes filled with a sudden pain.
And under the flickering light of the gas
She showed him her gleanings. ‘It’s broken glass,’
She said; ‘I hae lifted it frae the street
To be oot o’ the road o’ the bairnies’ feet.’

“Under the fluttering rags astir
That was a royal heart that beat;
Would that the world had more like her
Smoothing the road for its bairnies’ feet.”

XI

AT THE SHRINE OF BEAUTY



ANY are telling us that what the world needs to-day is Beauty. There are three types of character that are influenced by appeals that I am going to call spiritual. The scientist is swayed by the love of truth, the artist by the love of beauty and the saint by the love of goodness. These three temperaments are more closely connected than we sometimes are apt to suppose. All are related more or less intimately to the spiritual world. And the spiritual message comes to each in his own special way. The scholar reads his message in the rocks and the stars. The artist reads his in the flower and the sunset and the autumn leaf, in the flight of the bird and the curve of the swan and the note of the meadow-lark, in the imposing cathedral, in the beautiful painting. The message comes to the saint along the avenue of goodness. He reads it in the deed of sacrifice, in the practice of self-denial, in the unselfish task, in the holy apostolic life.

It is of the second type that we are just now

thinking and I am going to illustrate it by the life of one of its most distinguished apostles. Walter Pater is the man. Walter Pater was one of those rare elect souls to whom the appeal of beauty was supreme. He devoted his life to one particular branch of artistic work, the art of beautiful expression. At first his interest lay in the realm of metaphysics and philosophy. And indeed at one time he looked forward to taking orders in the Church. But his philosophical excursions and his theological ramblings did not take him far. They were halted by the sudden discovery one day of his acute sensitiveness to beauty. And it was in the palace of beauty that he was to be found henceforward permanently and happily at home.

A word or two first then about the man. He was born in the year 1839 and he died in 1894. His father was a physician who had spent some years in America. But he returned to England early in life and settled near Stepney, not far from London, where in due time Walter was born, and where he grew up in the quietest and sweetest of English homes. Those who have read that little narrative entitled "The Child in the House" will get a charming picture of his boyhood days, for a certain autobiographical thread is without doubt woven into the story. It is not only worth reading for the glimpses of light which it throws on his childhood. It is worth

reading just for its word melody. It is acknowledged to be one of the most exquisite pieces of prose in the English language. It is an imaginative study of the psychology of youth. It is largely retrospective. One might call it a beautiful rosary. Like De Quincy, Pater always has a fondness for the backward glance. His memory turns to the past with a sort of wistful swiftness. Here was a child extraordinarily plastic to early impressions, the coolness of dark rooms on hot summer days, the scent of old leather in the library, the winding staircase, the delicate lights and shades of the garden, the white Angora with a dark tail like an ermine's and a face like a flower, the first bereavement in the family. One notes how deeply he felt as a child this first lesson in mortality. Every room is haunted with echoes. Nature did not appeal to Pater so much as human nature. We see this in his study on Wordsworth. The house, the room, the furniture, the garden, the chest, the cornice, the door, the panel, the fireplace are far more to him than the brook or the lake or the marsh or the hill, because they have had the human touch.

Before he was twenty he had read all of Ruskin, and Ruskin's touch is traceable in all his writings, as is also Newman's and De Quincy's. But he lighted his torch undoubtedly at Ruskin's lamp. Like Amiel and Pascal, he never married. He wrote few letters and he never kept a diary.

He seemed to have had no great ambition. He paid but few visits and he made no effort to get acquainted with distinguished people, not even with those who were distinguished in his own line. His life was largely self-contained; it was a life of academic aloofness. He lived apart, a more or less cloistered life, and yet a real citizen of the world.

It will be recalled how Kant wrote a wonderfully accurate account of the South Sea Islanders although he never set foot outside of Germany, never indeed was more than thirty miles from Königsberg, his home. And just so Pater at Oxford writes about Greek studies, Greek art, Greek sculpture, their carvings, embroideries, shields, images, marbles, and he writes with marvellous technical erudition and detail, and yet he never set foot on the soil of Greece. And yet with all his temperamental reserve he seems to have been a very companionable man. He was always glad to see people, even those who were strangers. He showed no irritability at an interruption. There were no furtive glances at the clock. He was extremely courteous. He would agree with you rather than get into an argument. If you expressed an opinion in which he did not concur he would say, "I never thought of it in that light." His whole attitude to society was that of a spectator. He never tempted the interviewer or the advertiser

or the reporter. And he was not a great scholar, not even a great thinker. Indeed he was not even a great reader, and as he grew older he read less and less. He made no pretense to keep abreast of the literature of the day. Stevenson was all the vogue in his time, their lives overlap, but he once said to a friend: "I have never read a whole chapter of Stevenson and I have not read a single line of Kipling." Plato and the Bible were his favourite books in his later years. It is worth observing too that he was not a brilliant youth, nor in college had he been a brilliant student. There was no hint of promise in his university career. He appears there as a slow, serious boy. The only person who seemed to appreciate his gifts was Jowett, who said to him one day, "Mr. Pater, I believe you have a mind which will some day come to eminence." He seems to have written nothing during his undergraduate life. He showed no signs of a literary bent. He wrote no poetry as a boy, and so far as we know, very little prose, and what he did write is stiff and dry. So he did not master his rich vocabulary as a voluminous reporter, or through reams of scribbling that only saw the waste-basket.

We noted how he started out as a philosopher, then as a student of theology. It was a journey to Italy that changed his plans. His first sight of Italian art opened up a new world to him.

Here he devoted himself to a diligent study of the Italian renaissance, and after reading the life of Winckelman his conversion was complete. Winckelman it will be remembered was a German archæologist, the son of a poor shoemaker. He too had studied philosophy and theology. When he was in the prime of life, however, he became fascinated with the beauty of Greek art. He joined the Church of Rome and went to Italy where he wrote his great book "The History of Ancient Art." His end was tragic. He was murdered by a fellow traveller on the road to Trieste. This was the man who was destined to leave such a profound impression on Pater's life. He saw in Winckelman his own true prototype. He seemed to be reading the history of his own soul. And his first essay, written in 1866, was about this great German Hellenist, who by the way it is worth noting had such an influence also on Goethe's career. Henceforth Pater decided to devote all his energies to the worship of the beautiful.

He was never a linguist. He visited Italy often. He went there as he said to feed his hunger for beauty but he never took the trouble to even try to speak Italian. He travelled in France a great deal, but his knowledge of French was very limited, barely sufficient to make his wants known. He always spent his vacation at Heidelberg, but he made no effort to speak the

German tongue. He had no desire, it would seem, to be competent in any modern language except his own. He used to say, "Between you and me and the gate post, I hate a foreigner." English was the only tongue that he mastered. And it is a comfort to some of us that he wrote it with such painful difficulty. Composition was a real agony to him. It was like working at a pump when the water, deep down and hard to reach, refuses to flow. He was the most laborious of English writers. As the years went by, however, the effort grew less troublesome and irksome. Near the end he said to Mr. Gosse one day, "Writing is easier than it used to be. If I live long enough I may come in time to really like it." Like Sainte Beuve he was painstaking and patient and very free in the use of the file. He revised carefully and jealously and conscientiously, and it was from these stippled touches that his work came forth a perfect thing. He has literary mannerisms. He is fond of using words in their archaic sense. He is what would be called a scholarly writer. He is hardly ever witty although often humorous, but his humour is insidious. "I wish," he remarked to a friend one day, "I wish they would not call me a Hedonist; it produces such a bad impression on people who don't know Greek." He has favourite words, words like blithe, sordid, morbid, mortified, repose. He frequently uses the

expression "no doubt." In an argument it served as a sort of courteous retreat. The word "well" he often uses in a meditative sense, as for instance, "That man reminds me, well, of a steam engine stuck in the mud." He regarded enthusiasm as bad form. He disliked every form of extravagance with a strong temperamental dislike. It jarred him like a false note in music.

Perhaps his essay on Leonardo is the most brilliant thing he ever did. The versatility of the great painter, his life broken up into so many different channels and all of them deep channels, his absorption in the beautiful, so much so as to be almost unaware of the great upheavals through which his country was passing, strongly appealed to Pater. The descriptive passages in the essay are very exquisite. There is a strange magic about them like the smile on the face of Mona Lisa, a severe economy of statement and yet a subtlety of illustration that mark the perfect craftsman. Instance this familiar passage where he is describing Gioconda. "Hers is the head upon which all 'the ends of the world are come' and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty,

into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experiences of the world have etched and moulded there, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave." How magical are these words!

His religious ideas are expressed most clearly in his later essays, especially the story of Marius, the Epicurean. The story of Marius is a familiar one. It is the story of a strong mind, and a mind with an earnest religious bent, brought to the very door of the Christian faith. He tries every phase of philosophy. He becomes an Epicurean. He tries Stoicism and theism but none of these things give him what his heart is seeking. In the end he is brought face to face with Christianity. The challenge that it makes is largely an æsthetic one. The part of Christianity that appealed to him was not its conception of love, but its liturgical beauty, its detachment and philosophic composure. There is no sense of personality or fatherhood. He did not seem capable of disentangling religion from its accessories. Religion was a beautiful fringe to a useful garment. As the shadow of death begins

to fall, however, his faith in an unseen Presence seems to come nearer. His last moments were comforted with the sacrament. And the feeling which the book seems to leave is that if he had lived he would have become an earnest Christian.

His essay on Pascal was the last thing he wrote. It contains some of his deepest thoughts on the mystery of life. The essay was never finished. Indeed it breaks off in the middle of a sentence. It is his most thoughtful utterance on religious things. And it reveals him as a sceptic, but as an unhappy sceptic, shall I say an unwilling sceptic. His scepticism does not satisfy. It shows that the realm of beauty in which he lived lacked the warmth and the joy his heart craved. Indeed there are some words that do not fit Walter Pater, and Joy is one of them. The nearest approach he ever came to that state of bliss is best described by his own word *Pleasure*. If one were to have asked him what was the chief end of man he would have answered the chief end of man is pleasure, æsthetic pleasure, the pleasure that comes from the pursuit of the beautiful. His whole philosophy of life may be couched in Goethe's expression, self-culture. Make of life an art. Train every faculty to the top notch of acuteness so as to catch each fleeting glimpse of glory on the wing. Let there be beauty within to answer to all the beauty

without. In his interpretation of Plato he puts beauty above truth as the goal to be kept in view. And in the religious life, he places the emotions above duty. The chief end of man, he insisted, is not to glorify God, not even to live right. The chief end of man is to appreciate the beautiful and find one's satisfaction and pleasure in so doing. So truth is made the servant of beauty, and goodness the servant of pleasure. Herein lies the danger. It is surely a poor lookout for Christianity when men sacrifice truth for beauty. The mere worship of the beautiful is apt to lead to that deadliest cant that art has no connection with morality. No Palace of Art has ever been able to redeem the world. Pompeii was swathed in beauty, but rotten at the core. "When one subordinates beauty to virtue, what is that but the dishonour of the soul?"

In his interpretation of the Bible he was ultra liberal. His attitude toward the supernatural was a good deal like what Sir Edwin Arnold describes as "politeness toward possibilities." Christianity rests on certain assumptions or intuitions for which there never can be scientific proof. These assumptions may transcend reason but they can never fully satisfy reason. And so in all honest men's minds there must ever remain the element of doubt. And so his whole philosophy of the Christian Faith is something

like this: we can never be sure that the sacred story is true but neither can we ever be absolutely sure that the story is false. So we must make allowance for a great possibility, and when we do that, the possibility becomes the most important thing in the world. "Christianity thus becomes not a solution of the world's mystery, but rather a practical working theory of morals." And a theory that works for one reason and one only, because of its beauty. In a word, he was a moralizing sceptic. And like most moralizing sceptics, he made the attainment of ataraxia, or an untroubled equanimity, very largely the aim of his life.

Now Walter Pater is a splendid illustration of the serious-minded doubter. His spirit was naturally a doubting one. But his heart was never at rest. There was a love for the twilight in his whole make-up. I think there can be no doubt at all, that at one time he had lost all belief in the Christian Faith. He uses expressions which take an attitude of definite hostility to revealed religion. "When I knew him first," says Mr. Gosse, "he was a pagan without any guide but that of personal conscience, but the years brought with them a greater and greater longing."

Perhaps it is worth observing that he was a regular church attendant and always occupied his stall both morning and evening. In this like

Gibbon who, though an unbeliever, was a great churchman. He seemed to be happiest in sacred places. He seemed to find his greatest delight in processions and symbols, in the pomp of colour and melody. The mystic Tauler used to draw his cap over his eyes when he went out into the country so that the violets might not withdraw him from his inward communion. Pater on the other hand saw God in the violets or rather he saw God in the beauty of the violets. He had little sympathy for those who would smash all the carved work of a Catholic shrine, and substitute therefor a Puritan barn. Jowett said to him one day, "Mr. Pater, you seem to think that religion is all idolatry." Indeed he was a strong advocate for making the college service compulsory. In chapel he was a familiar figure. And it was always remarked that he always knelt, and remained kneeling, in a pose of the deepest reverence during the entire administration of the Holy Supper. He seemed to find a soothing influence in the service. There are those indeed who think that if he had lived longer he would have taken orders and spent his later days in the odour of the church. But he wavered between Apollo and Christ. Neither had absolute sway in his life. Some one calls him "A pilgrim in the region of faith." I would say rather a pilgrim in the realm of beauty. Beauty was the shrine at which he

knelt. His whole life was an offering to Venus. But the beauty of Venus is not enough. One thing it lacks. It lacks personality; it lacks incarnate expression; it lacks heart; it lacks soul; it lacks the beauty of holiness because holiness is unreal till it becomes a living manifestation. It lacks a Master; it lacks a Christ; it lacks the note of obedience.

“I heard Him call
Come follow, that was all.
My gold grew dim
My soul went after Him.
I rose and followed, that was all.
Who would not follow if he
heard His call?”

XII

IS OUR FAMILY LIFE A FAILURE?



CHRISTIANITY has no finer field of action than the home. If a man is living the right kind of life in his home, he is doing a momentous work; he can do nothing greater; the likelihood is that his walk and behaviour among his fellow men will be blameless. The home is the unit for all definite reform. Perhaps the most far-reaching work that any two young fluttering hearts can do on this earth is to create a real home. Because home is the soul of the nation. The strength of our Republic is in proportion to the number of its virtuous homes. Nations will not always fight for a principle, but they will always fight for their homes. No sacrifice for it is too great. The home tie is the strongest tie that can bind a people together. Home is the Castle where the husband is King and the wife is Queen.

John Mills was the first man in North Carolina to provide for the training of orphan children. He used to say: "I have looked around a good deal over this world, and I have never found anything to make men out of but boys;

and I have never found anything to make women out of but girls.' And if I may be allowed to extend that suggestion, I do not think there is anything to build a state out of but homes. You cannot build a state out of navies or armies. Japan is not a Christian nation, but the fundamental fact in the life of Japan is ancestor worship, *i. e.*, reverence for the fathers. They believe their ancestors to be alive and in vital connection with the life of their children. Think what that means. Surely no man would ever do a mean thing if he felt that he had a true parent standing by his side, and looking over his shoulder watching him.

The trouble with the world to-day is the home. I suppose there is more real sorrow in society just now rising directly from unhappy homes than from any other source. A rough estimate of the number of divorces in our land is about one in ten. We have in round numbers about 100,000 yearly. And the old mill keeps grinding out its bitter grist. We brand Mormonism as an unclean and loathsome thing, but is there really much to choose between the system that permits plural wives all at once, and the system that permits them in tandem fashion?

What can be done to restore and rehabilitate this crumbling American shrine? Can anything be done? The home is the basis of our whole national edifice. No doubt about that! The

Spartan mother believed that her mission was to train brave men for the state. She took no interest in her son unless he was a soldier. That was Plato's philosophy too, that sons should be raised for the state much as we raise cattle for the market. This was also the Prussian conception. But it is not the Christian ideal. There can hardly be any room for debate on the statement that it was the corruption of the family and the destruction of the home life which led to the fall of the Roman Empire. We have no less an authority for that than Gibbon. And there is no higher than he—not on old Rome. When the home disappears, the Church disappears, the state disappears, everything fundamental and structural disappears. There are no homes in the heathen world; there never were. It is the Bible that has created the home. And where there is no Bible there are no homes. So that to strengthen the home, to purify it, to enrich it is the noblest work in which the forces of righteousness can engage.

And this is not an easy task to-day because so much of our literature is outspokenly hostile. Agnosticism and infidelity have spent their energies hitherto fighting the Bible and the Church, but to-day they are laying their slimy finger on the home. They are riddling it with poisonous bullets. In a play produced a short time ago, one character counsels another in these words:

“If your country’s laws forbid you change your laws;
If your family forbids you change your family;
If your church forbids you change your church;
If your God forbids you change your God.”

The glory of the Anglo-Saxon race is her literature. This is true from the days of Chaucer to the days of Tennyson. But to-day our shelves are lined with books (and they are not all foreign books either) that are frankly and openly anti-family. “A large percentage of our modern novels to-day,” says Wm. Lyon Phelps of Yale, “represent marriage as an intolerable boredom.” In French fiction, as Andrew Lang once remarked, “love comes after marriage punctually enough but it is always love for some one else.”

Even a writer like Lefcadio Hearn says in his last book: “To-day we know that all social progress, all material strength, all national vigour, intellectual as well as physical, depends essentially upon the family, upon the morality of the household, upon the relations of parents to children.”

In German and Scandinavian, and of late years even in English literature, Christian marriage is stealthily and insidiously attacked. Here’s Ibsen. He does not hesitate to say that monogamy destroys love. Here’s Nordeau: he straight up and down denounces wedlock. Here’s Bernard Shaw: he says that marriage is

the corner-stone of the system which produces all our social disasters. He advocates "a scientific breeding of the human race." His idea is that what the world needs is great men and that great men can never be born of parents who are mated for life. Certainly a most astonishing deliverance. One is tempted to ask if John Wesley was a great man or David Livingstone or Carlyle or Cromwell or Phillips Brooks or several dozen others one might mention. It might do Mr. Shaw some good to read about the kind of homes such men as these came from. H. G. Wells qualifies his ideas on Free Love by a system of State Eugenics.

We are hearing a great deal these days about atmosphere. We have become surprisingly interested in the weather bureau. There are cures for certain diseases which depend almost entirely on climate. About fifty thousand tourists go out every winter to Southern California. They are willing to pay any exorbitant price for the sunshine and the warmth. During the hot summer days people fairly flock to the seashore. They are in search of an atmosphere. And the great thing about home is its atmosphere. Every home is an individual thing. It has its own atmosphere. You go into one home and you breathe a sweet incense. Like Tom Moore's vase it is perfumed by the roses it carries. You can almost feel a sacred presence. The very next

door something entirely different! You detect at once the odour of the street. There is sordidness and petulance and wrangling. Ill temper sours the air. You sense the turmoil of the market-place. There is in it the chill of winter.

Do you recall how the mother of a great Chinese philosopher trained her boy? I refer to Mengsten. Her home was near a slaughter house and when she noticed that her son was watching with indifference the pain of the animals she moved away. Her next home happened to be near a graveyard, and not finding that wholesome, she moved again. This is what a pagan mother did. She tried to give her child the right environment, the right atmosphere. I cannot but feel that the greatest work the Church can do to-day is atmospheric.

What is needed to-day in our land more than anything else is a holy crusade for the reinforcement of the family and of the principles on which a true family life is built. I am down on Bolshevism because it is the sworn enemy of the family. Some preachers are emphasizing the social gospel and some the ethicizing of economics and some international peace and some the brotherhood of man. Some are perfect faddists on what they call the Fundamentals. But the one institution in which all these aims can be engendered and fostered is the Christian family. The criminal question to-day we know is largely a

question of the home. Our judges are constantly reminding us of that, that the majority of our criminals are mere boys. Some one has said that the most important bit of news in any morning paper is the column headed "Births," far more important than the speeches in the Senate. The true riches of the world is in its babies. "Their little veins are the true veins of wealth." And there are 100,000 of them born every day! Thirty-six million a year. What a transfusion of freshness and renewal to a sick and tired world!

Every little while we have the question discussed, Is marriage a failure? Certainly a discouraging lot of them are tragic failures. It is claimed that 90% of all the children in our Reform schools are the children of parents who are not living together. Two little boys were playing together in Newport last summer. One said: "Hello; there goes my new papa." "Humph," said the other, "he's nothing; he was my papa once."

Marriage for money is a dead failure. Marriage in haste is a failure. My own associate told me this winter that he married a couple at 8, and at 11 (three hours later) they both returned saying they felt they had made a mistake and asking if the union could not be annulled. Marriage as a trial trip is a failure. Marriage to be dissolved when "I'm tired of your com-

pany'' is a failure. But marriage founded on true love, never. There is nothing sweeter this side of Paradise than two young loving hearts living in a cozy nest they call their home. I sat for years in a simple country church every Sabbath morning, and out of the old-fashioned windows I would gaze for hours at the leaning tombstones and the old graveyard where the dust of my fathers rested. It is a beautiful spot and sacred. It is more sacred now than ever. But the most sacred place of all is the old home. No great cathedral, no grand scene in nature can ever be what that home was when the world was young—when roses bloomed and cherries ripened and I was a boy. As I look back upon it now it is filled with very fragrant memories. It reminds one of taking a walk into the country these autumn days. One is besieged on every side with gorgeous colour and the tender tribute of the falling leaves.

In these good old times there was an institution called the Family Altar. To-day I much fear—if the truth must be told—it will have to be confessed that this holy shrine has about tumbled into ruins. And it is the greatest blow the Church has yet sustained. Perhaps the cause of true religion has never received a blow as serious; for nothing can take its place in the economy of Christian training—nothing. It has been a veritable nursery of greatness, and the

loss is simply past computing. The family altar has made preachers; it has made missionaries; it has made strong citizens. A strong navy is not America's defense. Forts do not defend any more. We are learning that the great siege guns can tear to slivers all the granite and concrete round Gibraltar. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal; they are spiritual. And one of the greatest spiritual weapons we can wield is the weapon of family prayer. Nothing strengthens the home life like it; nothing so sweetens it either. It softens all friction. Hearts that kneel at God's feet every morning cannot get very far apart during the day. It is the very perfume of the place. It weaves into the fabric of memory silver threads that remain bright and shining forever. There is no better way to bind the heart of a child with chains of gold to the throne above. It is the altar after all that makes the place a sanctuary. Dr. Dale used to say that every Christian church should be an institution to render adult conversions needless. That is what every home should be. The Church is ever praying for a revival. Let her keep on praying. When it comes it will begin at the hearthstone.

Some years ago a missionary who had been in China for a quarter of a century returned to America on his first furlough. He landed in San Francisco. The editor of a great daily sent a reporter to interview him after he had been a

month in the country, lecturing and preaching up and down the Pacific coast. One question asked by the reporter was, What particular changes have you observed in America since you left five and twenty years ago? His answer was, "The greatest change I have noted is that hotel life is taking the place of home life." It is one of the most unhopeful commentaries on our American life.

XIII

PREPAREDNESS



OME years ago the word was much in vogue. The country was stirred to a high pitch of fever heat when it was learned how wretchedly prepared we were for a possible call to arms.

We were told that we were in danger and must prepare. The word had a sinister sound. It was a bugle cry. It had a warlike note, and in war it is a rule to be ready and to have your "guns pointed toward the enemy."

But preparation does not always argue danger. Sometimes we need preparation for our joys full as much as for our sorrows, sometimes more. "Many a Parsifal is able to unhorse his enemy and yet blunders irretrievably when he sees the vision of the Holy Grail." How often it happens that we are prepared to meet the evil when we are not prepared at all to meet the good! It was thus that Jacob was taken by surprise; "Surely Jehovah is in this place and I knew it not."

One would not be far wrong in saying that the

keynote of the Bible is this word prepare. That is what life is; it is a preparation. Our chief business down here is to get ready for something else, something further on. Only the far-off-future phase of the matter has been overworked. There is much in the good Book, to be sure, about preparation for the next life, but there is even more about preparation for this life. It is a cardinal mistake, fathered largely by the old divines, to suppose that great preparation is needed to meet death. There is nothing in death to terrify us. Ten million lads met death in the Great War. They were not afraid. Why should we be? They have taken out of death a good deal of its sting. As Harry Lauder remarked, "Why should I be afraid to go where my John went?" We face death but once; we are facing life every day. It is life that is the big thing not death. One does not need to die to experience eternity: we are experiencing eternity now.

This is the clear concurrent testimony of the Old Testament. All the voices are of one mind on this score. Instance Amos. Amos is the oldest of the prophets whose writings have come down to us. He is the first of the so-called minor prophets, minor that is, not in the qualitative but in the quantitative sense. They wrote less than the others; in that sense only are they minors. In this particular prophecy there

is no mention of the next world at all. What Amos was concerned about was this world, this present world, this present evil world as Paul labelled it. It is not eternity he is thinking of but time. His message is a "Tract for the Times."

Take just one of his trumpet blasts, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." The warning is not spoken to an individual: it is addressed to the nation. "O Israel," he repeatedly says. All through the prophecy it is "Ye people of Israel" or "ye inhabitants of Jerusalem." It is to the country as a whole that he makes his stirring appeal. The whole land was morally corrupt. The poor were oppressed and the needy were crushed. It was a world packed with every kind of wrong. The wealthy indulged in their drunken orgies stretched on ivory divans, singing their lewd and flashy songs. He saw the merchants using false weights. There was no justice in the land. The poor were exploited, the market-place was filled with trickery. He saw greed rampant on every side. Religion was a gilded sham. Vice was coupled with the worship of Jehovah. Women were attached to the sanctuary. The world that Amos knew was a rotten world, "a world that trampled on the fundamental sanctities of pity for the dying and respect for the dead." It was cruel to the poor and that, in his mind, was the cardinal iniquity. Their lives

were bartered for dirty dividends and it stirred his clean red blood. It is to a land in this scandalous condition that the prophet peals out his blast of warning. Every one of these holy men of old thunders about righteousness but Amos hardly speaks of anything else. His gospel is a great social gospel. God is at the basis of all morality. The prophet's whole message is a call to a better citizenship.

Some one has said that the personality of Amos is built of granite, Aberdeen granite. He was a man with a tremendous conscience and it might sometimes appear that his stern, rugged, Puritan nature would make him cold and hard to the tender and the beautiful. But not so! He loved the country, the hills and the brooks and the meadows. He was a simple shepherd lad who had always lived a quiet pastoral life caring for his flocks and his herds. He was a staunch apostle of the simple life, loving the great silences. In all his utterances there is the breeze of the hills and the freshness of the mountain air. He was not a man of what we to-day call culture. He was not a graduate of any school. He was not a professor in a theological seminary. He was indeed an unlettered man. He did not write the polished language that Isaiah wrote. He makes mistakes in grammar and syntax. He had never been trained for the priesthood. He was not even an ordained prophet. "Then answered

Amos and said to Amaziah, I am no prophet, neither am I one of the sons of the prophets; I am simply a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees. And the Lord took me from following the flock and then he said unto me, go prophesy unto my people Israel.”

And yet the man's words are quivering with eloquence and fervour and splendid moral disdain. His little book is rich in imagery and deft turns of expression. If he was not an ordained prophet he most surely was an ordained poet. How many beautiful lines from the lips of this old Hebrew herdsman are familiar to us! He speaks of the earthquake heaving up the land. He notes the basket of summer fruit. He speaks of turning the shadow of death into the morning and of making the day dark with night. “Ye were as a firebrand plucked from the burning” is another of his immortal phrases. Speaking of their public worship, he says, “I hate your feasts, I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Take away from me the noise of your songs.” One commentator observes that it is somewhat humiliating to think that what we call classical music may be only noise in God's ears. “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” is one of his classic questions. Who can doubt that this son of the sheepfold was a genuinely ordained poet?

Now the world of our day is not altogether un-

like the world of Amos' day. We, too, are on the verge of a bran-new social order. "The whole creation is groaning." For ours is a tragically wounded world, torn with terrible sorrows and washed with woeful sins. We are tossed about in the storm. There is a movement going on for the bringing in of a better state of things. It is an international movement. Its aim is not merely to alleviate the condition of the poor; it purposes to touch rich and poor. How to drive out all the evils of the old system. To be a citizen of the Kingdom of God does not absolve us from the duties and obligations of American citizenship. The state is divine just as truly as the Church. The state exists to train up good citizens. It is God's will that there should be righteous government and not anarchy. Some think the new program can be established by force. Others argue that force will only bring back all the evils it strives to overthrow. The question is, how to prepare the way for a better society; how to lay the foundation for the building of a better world. And there are two voices clamouring to be heard. One says, Improve men's conditions and you will better their lives. The other replies, Improve their lives and you will better their conditions. But the thought arises, why may not both voices be true? We cannot afford to ignore the social and physical and illiterate condition of the ignorant and down-

trodden and criminal classes. But if we aim at nothing more than material betterment and silence the spiritual note, are we going to see fulfilled the happy ideal for which we hope and pray? Millions to-day are accepting the teaching of Karl Marx that men are nothing but animals and that the only real pleasures are the pleasures of the flesh. "We must destroy the last vestige of God and religion," says Marx. The logical result of this philosophy is suicidal; it is suicidal for the individual and for the nation. Both of Karl Marx's own daughters, and his son-in-law and disciple, Paul Lafargue, all committed suicide. They advocated it: it was part of their propaganda. Lafargue planned the date and the method of his own death ten years in advance and carried out the program in 1911 to the letter.

And it is suicidal for the nation. It has been tried. It is being tried to-day in Russia. It was tried centuries ago in some of the republics of Greece and in parts of the old Roman Empire. There is a book entitled "Where Socialism Failed" by Stewart Grahame. It is the story of two brothers who emigrated some years ago from Australia to South America to form a community of Socialists. They took with them a colony of several hundred men with their wives and families. The men were the pick of the working classes of New South Wales. The Paraguay

Government had transferred to them, free and unincumbered, 600 square miles of fertile land, as well as great herds of cattle and sheep. Paraguay, it will be remembered, at one time had been a prosperous country. It was the first country in South America to have a railroad. But the mad ambitions of an autocrat had brought ruin to the land. And the ruling powers felt that if some fresh blood were brought into their country to develop their industries, it might mean the return of better things. So about 400 Socialists from New South Wales accepted the tender, and sailed in 1893 to settle in their new Canaan and work out their system of communism on a sort of semi-national scale. They were to be given perfect freedom of government and education and religion. As far as religion was concerned, there was to be none. One of the articles of incorporation of the colony was that the Deity was to be excluded from any participation in its affairs. God was not to be recognized. The sequel to this experiment is a familiar story: it has often been told, how envy and jealousy and hatred crept into the little paradise, how they all got to quarrelling, and how in the end they drove their leader, William Lane, out of the country. Coming back to Australia with a few who had remained faithful, the interesting part of his experience was his conviction that it was not possible to run a society, as long as people are

constituted as they are, without some sort of religion. Listen to his words, "Under pure materialism with no lofty ideal for a guiding motive, a people will deteriorate; there must be a divine imperative."

It certainly was an astonishing pronouncement and all the more astonishing that it was the sober conclusion of a personal adventure. Can men be governed without God? Amos did not think they could. And those who have tried the experiment agree. The heart of the social problem as of every other problem is the human heart. The brotherhood of man is a powerless truth if there be no divine Fatherhood. The salvation of society is not simply an economic question; it is a moral question; it is a spiritual question.

What then can be done, it will be asked, what can be done to assist in bringing in a new and better order? Can anything be done? Yes indeed, much; several things are possible. We can, for one thing, prepare ourselves. We can keep our own individual name unspotted. There is nothing that a true patriot can leave behind him that can be compared for one little moment to a good name. That is a big part of pure religion. The richest contribution that any man can offer to his country is to give to it the right kind of a life. One Savonarola saved wicked Florence. One Aristides lifted Athens higher perceptibly. Ten righteous men would have

saved Sodom. And what is going to save America is a glorious company of noble men. Good men are the salt of the earth. Good men are the light of the world. They are the key to the problem.

Another thing! We can insist that our nation put the emphasis on the simple things. We must needs get back to nature, as Amos did, and learn to drink her milk of joy. We must return to the simple wants of the human heart. So many have lost the sense that the really great things, the enduring things, lie in the common gifts that are all about us. The satisfying joys and pleasures are scattered broadcast within the reach of all.

“How good is man’s life the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in
joy.”

Perhaps there never was as much extravagance rampant as there is to-day. Never were luxuries in such demand! A prominent foreigner visiting our country some months ago remarked that the waste in our hotels was cause for pain. The Secretary of the National Jewellers’ Board of Trade said recently, “We cannot find enough expensive stones to fill our orders.” Millions abroad are freezing and starving: they haven’t enough clothing to cover their emaciated bodies and protect them from the winter’s blast. Half

the babies in Central Europe are hungry. And yet in our land to-day there is a perfect sinful orgy of waste. There is an absorption in pleasure. The American people are amusement mad, money mad, luxury mad. There is a selfish disregard of public interest. And it is the sure and certain road to national decay.

Some years ago a very remarkable will was discovered. It was written by an insane man in a lunatic asylum and was found in his portfolio after his death. The will was first published in *Harper's Weekly*, September 3, 1898. It was entitled "My last Will and Testament." Its author, Williston Fish, was a graduate of West Point and later a lawyer in Chicago. It reads as follows:

"My right to live, being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but, these things excepted, all else in the world I now proceed to devise and bequeath. I give to the good fathers and mothers, in trust for their children, all good little words of praise and encouragement, all quaint pet names and endearments, and I charge the said parents to use them generously, as the needs of the children require. I leave the children for the term of their childhood the flowers, fields, blossoms and woods, with the right to play in them, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. I devise to the children the banks, the brooks, and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, and the white clouds that float over the giant trees; and I leave to the children

long, long days to be merry in, and the night and the moon and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at.

“I devise to the boys jointly all the useful idle fields, all the pleasant waters where one may swim, all the streams where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate, to have and to hold the same for the period of their boyhood. The meadows, with the clover, blossoms, and butterflies thereof; the woods and their appurtenances—squirrels, birds, echoes, and strange noises; all the distant places which may be visited, together with the adventures there to be found. I give to the said boys each his own place by the fireside at night, with all the pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance and without any incumbrance or care.

“To lovers I devise their imaginary world, with whatever they may need, as stars, sky, red roses by the wall, the bloom of the hawthorn, the sweet strains of music, and aught else they may desire. To young men I bequeath all boisterous and inspiring sports and rivalry, and I give to them disdain of weakness and undaunted confidence in their own strength. I give them power to make lasting friendships and prepossessing companions, and to them exclusively I give all merry songs and brave choruses.

“To those who are no longer children or youths or lovers I leave memory, and bequeath them the volumes of the poems of Burns, Shakespeare, and other poets, and to live over their old days again without any tithe or deduction of any kind.

“To the loved ones with snowy crowns I be-

queath peace, old age, the love and gratitude of their children, until they fall asleep.”

Some one has observed, “I do not know how mad this man was, but surely our land needs to-day a little of his madness.”

One thing more is clamouring for expression, and that is, to put the emphasis as a people upon a life of service. A gentleman of leisure remarked recently, evidently without considering what an incriminating confession it was, “Well, if I were to die to-morrow, I’ve had my share of the world’s fun.” How poor and mean and pitiful such a life will seem some day! As Bishop Brooks says, “It is not when the ship is fretting against the dock that she learns her true life; it is when the rope that ties her to the pier is let go and she plunges into the channel and points her nose to the great ocean—then it is that she finds her true life.” And it is not when we are hugging the shore of human shelter and living our little landlocked lives that we find our liberty. We were built for the ocean. The great wide waste of human need is calling us and no man truly finds himself until he hears and obeys that call divine. Our country to-day has many enemies to fight. We have selfish capitalists and violent agitators and heartless profiteers. There are men in our midst, it must be confessed, who do not hesitate to wrap the flag around their

selfish bodies and then proceed to rob and plunder the poor just as they did in Amos' day. These men are highway robbers. They are making more Bolsheviks than any red propaganda from Petrograd. Sometimes we ask ourselves who is the real traitor? According to our Constitution treason against the United States consists in levying war against our Government or in giving aid or comfort to the enemy. But are there not other forms of hostility just as damaging? A traitor is one who betrays a trust. And isn't service to our flag these critical days, isn't that a sacred trust?

When the Great War was at its height we watched with admiring interest the men who gave their lives and labours to the Government. They went to Washington and worked for a dollar a year. Some of them toiled in lowly stations. They did it out of love for their country. They were men of means and their loyalty and patriotism was as large as their purses. But now that the war is over these men have gone back to make more money and pile up still bigger fortunes. But, man, is not your fortune ample enough? Is it not larger really than you need? Is it not about as much as you can serenely manage? Why toil and sweat for more? Why not show in peace a little of that splendid sacrifice that you showed in war? There are many who feel that there never would have been a war

if strong men of influence and gifts had realized their social and political responsibility and articulated it in action. Some one has observed that we were never so magnificent as in war and never so mean as in peace. Why not cut down some of your office work and give the Church a little of your time? Why not give the hospitals a little of your time? Why not give your family a little more of your time? Why not give the State a little more of your time? Some years ago when Kossuth was in this country he made a rather striking statement: "If shipwreck should ever befall us as a nation, the rock on which it would split would be our devotion to our private interests at the expense of the Republic."

"When all the choric peal shall end,
That through the fanes hath rung;
When the long lauds no more ascend
From man's adoring tongue;

"When whelmed are altar, priest, and creed;
When all the faiths have passed;
Perhaps, from darkening incense freed,
God may emerge at last."

XIV

SPLITTING HAIRS



EARLY all the troubles that have afflicted the Church have been questions of splitting hairs. Theologians have been adepts in the art of hair-splitting, and a great army of bigots has followed in their train. In the autobiography of Mark Rutherford there is a very delightful chapter on the Dorcas meetings in his parish. Once a month the wives and daughters drank tea with each other and the evening was devoted to making clothes for the poor. The minister was expected to read to them while they worked. As the work was somewhat secular, it was not considered necessary that the passages selected for reading should be from the Bible, but as the meeting was a church meeting it was felt that they should have a religious flavour, so that books on topics altogether worldly were not regarded as apropos. In fact the readings were usually from the denominational journal. It was perfectly legitimate to read the births and deaths and marriages from this journal, although

it would not have been thought right to read them from the morning newspaper. It was agreed "with a fineness of discrimination which was very remarkable" that it was quite right to read them in a paper that was "serious." On one occasion Mark started the "Vicar of Wakefield," but after getting through a chapter the company voted that it would be better if it were discontinued. On another occasion he tried a selection from George Fox's Journal, but this was objected to also on the ground that "he did not belong to us."

I can well remember how in my own childhood home, cards were tabooed with a stern and holy horror. But we children had another set, in which the king was pictured as a rugged farmer, his buxom wife was the queen; and instead of spades and hearts and clubs and diamonds there were potatoes and turnips and apples and corn. It was a fine subtle distinction. We played the game in just the same way, only it was the ace of spuds instead of spades. A violin was not permitted around our fireside. It was in those days an instrument of unrighteousness. We were allowed the jew's-harp and the chanter but not the fiddle. Among the story writers only Sir Walter was in paternal favour. Although Burns sat on the table side by side with Bunyan.

One of the severest criticisms of the Master

was when He called the scribes and Pharisees to task for magnifying trifles. "Ye blind guides, ye tithe mint and anise and cummin but ye forget the weightier matters of the law." They were strangely meticulous about sifting out the small, the picayune, the minute, while in the same breath they gulped down the large, the ponderous, the important. "You strain out the gnat and you swallow the camel." Think of the way these old scribes treated the Sabbath. Consider the mountain of petty observances. They knew every letter of the law. They had a thousand traditions to uphold concerning it. They were idolaters of details. A knot which could be untied with one hand might be untied on the seventh day of the week, but if it required both hands it was unlawful. Two thousand cubits was a Sabbath day's journey but 2,001 was forbidden. It was a sin to carry a burden, they argued. And when the question arose, how much is a burden? they answered it by saying that a loaf of bread was a burden: two might carry it but not one. It was so written in the Mishna and the Gemara. There were three and thirty different ways in which the holy day could be profaned. There were more than fifty varieties of mint and anise and cummin which had to be carefully tithed. Righteousness was a question of rules and regulations. It was a matter of etiquette. The trivial

things were the important things. Fasts and feasts and washing cups and platters, and tracing genealogies to prove the directness of their descent from Abraham—these were the topics that concerned them most. It was much ado about nothing. The whole tragic sophistry is familiar.

In that little volume by William Lyons Phelps on "Reading the Bible" there is a story told of his childhood: "One day by mere chance I hit upon an expedient that helped me to remember the Bible stories. I was drawing pictures. My prolonged and unusual silence in the room aroused the interest of my mother: 'What are you doing there?' 'Drawing pictures, Mother.' 'But don't you know this is Sunday and you must not draw pictures on Sunday.' Suddenly I remembered the Bible. 'But, Mother, it'll be all right to draw Bible pictures, won't it?' She turned the suggestion up and down in her mind and found it good. I therefore set to work and after another period of silence I proudly exhibited to her a soldier armed to the teeth literally, for in addition to gun and pistol he had a large knife in his mouth. 'Didn't I tell you not to ——' 'But, Mother, this is Joab captain of the host of Israel.' "

And so this interesting sabbatarian exploit on splitting hairs was evidently closed to the satisfaction of both parties.

Consider the sticklers for ceremony and orthodoxy that we have with us to-day. Multitudes are still bound and wound in the ceremonies of ritualism. The trouble with the Church has always been its formalism. The Pharisees marvelled that Jesus ate without washing His hands. Why, not to wash one's hands before eating was considered a crime almost as flagrant as murder. But with one master-stroke He swept away this slavery to tradition. And the same is true in the matter of creeds. No better illustration of skillful hair-splitting is to be found anywhere than in almost all our creedal statements. The Council of Nice defined the doctrine of the Trinity. What an astonishing deliverance it is! Whole pages being devoted to the distinction between *omoousioi* and *omoiousioi*. And were the members of this historic Council models of virtue? Well, Constantine was one of them, and this same Constantine put his wife to death and also his son. The Westminster divines in their "Confession" gave us a long explanatory chapter on foreordination and free will. Has any honest unprejudiced mortal ever understood it? The coloured preacher said, "God predestines man to be saved and the Devil predestines man to be lost and man has the casting vote," and I rather think he came as near throwing light on the matter as any of the theologians. True religion is never an occult and mystic thing.

Why should our tenets make it such? Why should they be so hopelessly entangled? Why should not a creed illumine a faith rather than obscure it? If we must have credenda, why not insist on making them brief and clear and simple. An intricate faith in such a world as ours is self-condemned.

Sectarianism too is still with us. True it is slowly passing, although there are many yet who would keep the old wounds open. These continue to wax eloquent on their own particular communion. As Joseph Parker once put it, "Episcopalianism and Presbyterianism and Methodism look like solar systems to them." Pastor Thwackum in "Tom Jones" says, "When I mention religion I mean the Christian religion and not only the Christian religion but the Protestant religion, and not only the Protestant religion but the Church of England." The story is an old and troubled one. What an unfortunate chapter it has contributed to the history of the Church! "I am of Paul and I of Apollos and I of Cephas and I of Christ." We look over the field to-day and what a lamentable confusion we see. The situation is nothing less than a tragic scandal. If it only made for efficiency it would have an argument for its defense, but it cannot even claim this. Mr. Carroll tells us that we have 150 separate divisions in our own land. We have groups named

after some great leader, Lutherans, Calvinists, Wesleyans, Swedenborgians. We have sects differing in regard to the Christian ordinances, Mennonites, Friends, Salvationists, Christian Scientists; others in regard to the Second Coming. Certain bodies of Plymouth Brethren refused to vote at the recent election because they said the return of our Lord is imminent. "What matters to this world is not important." Christ prayed for His followers that they all might be one, and yet we go out to heathen China and take the book that contains this prayer and we preach several dozen different interpretations of His teachings. David Swing once remarked in his inimitable way that you can gauge the barbarity of an island by the multiplicity of its tongues. And judged by that standard, how barbarous to these poor Orientals our Christianity must often seem to be. Denominationalism to-day must surely be the most confusing fact confronting a Chinese seeking light. But the days of the sectarian are numbered. We will keep on a little longer no doubt patching up the old fences, but they are rapidly getting beyond repair. Soon, let us hope, they will be needless palisades. We will then be relegating them as curiosities to some strange museum. "Then we shall become one flock, one shepherd."

Still again there is the question of inspiration. What quibblers we are there! How the Church

has quarrelled over texts! What a slave she has been to the letter! There is not a single heresy that has tormented the Church that has not been caused largely by a too literal interpretation of the letter. We forget that the letter killeth. We seem not to realize that the important thing about the Bible is the blade, not the scabbard. Some are fanatics for verbal dictation. Others have lost their sense of proportion. They would insist that the third chapter of Deuteronomy is as important as the third of John. In answer to a question of Peter as to how many times we should forgive our brother for an offense, the Master said seventy times seven. Seventy times seven is 490. But was this His meaning? Was He speaking arithmetically? Did He mean that we were to be released from any obligation to be forgiving on the 491st offense? Is the word of truth to be approached with a tape measure? Are we supposed to repudiate our imagination when we read the book? What untold harm the rigid literalist has done! He persists in reading as prose what was never intended for prose. He is always saying, I believe in arithmetic. He forgets that there is a difference between arithmetic and statistics. He goes on the theory that nothing is true but the problems of mathematics. But how illogical this is! Is not great poetry true? Is not great fiction true? So many imagine that a myth is a lie. And if

you were to say to them that there were myths in the Bible they would be horrified. But a myth is not necessarily a lie. What is a myth? A myth is a story that has come down to us from the prehistoric past and it may be just as true as any problem in Euclid. When Plato desired to utter some specially important truth he used the vehicle of the myth. When we are dealing with the myth we do not ask, Is it true but does it convey the truth?

The Sadducees once came to Jesus hoping to trip Him in His talk. A poor woman, they said, had seven husbands. Now in Heaven which of the seven is going to claim her? But the Master replied, "You do err not knowing the Scriptures, for in Heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are as the angels of God." And there are many to-day like this poor woman. They love to juggle over curious questions. What would have become of Adam and Eve if they had not eaten the forbidden fruit? Who was Melchizedek's father? Where did Jesus get the clothes which He wore after the resurrection? How many people will the New Jerusalem hold, according to the dimensions given in the Apocalypse? A man once came to Mr. Moody with a question that he said was disturbing him: "What was God doing before He made the world?" It will be remembered that Mr. Bernard Shaw discusses this question in his book

“Back to Methuselah.” But to all such idle questions the Bible is impressively silent.

Consider too the strange conceptions of the Christian life itself. Miss Maude Royden told us during her recent visit of a Sunday-school superintendent with whom she was acquainted. The man was the assistant manager of a factory whose business was the manufacture of fetters for slaves in Arabia. He expounds to the children on Sunday the love of Christ, and during the week he spends his time making things that degrade his fellow man. Another factory she spoke about and in the same parish, was a plant for the making of idols for the peoples of heathen lands. And this factory likewise is controlled by Christian capital. What strange and mysterious hair-splitting such people must indulge in to shape their creed to their conduct. We are reminded of John Newton. John Newton wrote many of our beautiful hymns: “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds;” “Amazing grace how sweet the sound;” “Glorious things of thee are spoken;” “Safely through another week.” But the ugly fact is that for many years after his conversion John Newton did continue to carry on the slave trade. Imagine this great divine writing these words, “I never knew sweeter or more frequent hours of communion than in my last two slave voyages to Guinea.” It is true that near the end and after he had

abandoned the unholy business, he wrote these words: "I was a wild beast on the west coast of Africa but the Lord caught me and tamed me." But one wonders what strange tuning he must have indulged in to harmonize the groaning of the slave with the rapture of the poet.

The conclusion of the whole matter is that it is high time surely for the Church of God to learn her lesson. She must stop quibbling and cavilling and trifling. The Master was a big man. He did not spend His time on dots, jots, strokes, tittles. His theme was the Kingdom and that is a mountainous conception. He sent His disciples out on a big job. "Go ye and teach all nations." The Kingdom touches the whole circumference of human behaviour. It reaches out across national and international frontiers. "Go into all the world." The "uttermost parts" is our goal. So often we hear the phrase "the simple Gospel." No one talks of simple science. Who claims that our Gospel is simple? Contrariwise, it is the most stupendous mystery that ever challenged the intellect and heart of man. The Apostle to the Gentiles called it "The unsearchable riches;" "the wisdom of God in a mystery;" "the secret which from the beginning hath been hid."

XV

BECAUSE I LOVE AMERICA



WHEN some one once expressed surprise to Mr. Gladstone that he was such a faithful church attendant, his answer was, "I go to church because I love England." Was it not a capital rejoinder? Why should not every true American say, I go to church because I love America. Coulson Kernaghan has a little booklet entitled "The World Without a Child." What would happen to our land, he argues, if it ceased to welcome children, if the race should decide to no longer bring children into the world? Mr. Kernaghan, by the way, is fond of picturing hypothetical situations of this kind. Some years ago he published a brochure called "The child, the wise man and the Devil." It was an allegorical dream in which the author imagined himself to be transported to Rome, where a great conclave of people was gathered to depose the Christ. They were all agreed that the Man of Galilee was a myth, that He had never lived. And, as he worked it out, it was a rather startling conception—a world without a Christ.

It will be remembered how some fifty years ago the late Professor Henry Rogers published a volume which he called "The Eclipse of Faith." He imagined that on a certain morning the world awoke to find that it had no Bible. Every copy of the Good Book had strangely disappeared and even every quotation from the sacred page had in some unaccountable way been lost. The very name and memory of the Book were gone. A world without a Bible! If I had the gift of these men, I should like to attempt the vision of a world without a church. What a strange kind of world would it be! Stores, banks, hotels, garages, theatres, operas, dancing halls, asylums, libraries, hospitals, warehouses, factories, but no church. Nothing to suggest man's immortal nature! Resorts for gaiety and pleasure and recreation and rest, but no resort for the spirit. Restaurants for bread and butter but no restaurant for the soul! A city without a church! A nation without a church! A world without a church!

There can be little question I think that so far as attendance is concerned, the Church to-day is on the wane. People are not attracted to the hill of Zion as in the days of yore; the simplest explanation perhaps being that they are not interested. The place has lost a good deal of its one time drawing power. As Dr. Cairns tries to show in his survey "The army and religion,"

there are three waves of criticism pounding at the church door to-day. First it lacks the spirit of reality, and then it lacks love, and worst of all it lacks life.

But the criticisms are legion. There is not time to even cite them. Let us look rather at the other side. What has the Church stood for during all the years of our history? What has it meant to the life—say of the American people? What, to get down to rock bottom, does the concept itself signify? What does it symbolize? A church to begin with implies a building. Every building stands for something. Here is a bank. What does a bank represent? A bank represents deposits, exchange, stocks, bonds, collateral. Here is a school. That means children, teaching, discipline. Here is a picture gallery. That signifies art, beauty, refinement. Here is a college. That denotes culture, research, scholarship. Well, here is a church. Of what is it the symbol? What does it import? What is its prophecy? What is its message to the soul of man?

And certainly the first answer to this question is, the holiness of the divine life, and as a corollary, the holiness of a good deal of our human life. When we ask what was the central idea of the character of Jehovah as the Jew regarded it, the answer unquestionably is holiness. Beyond every other attribute this stood out as the distinctive differential of Israel's God—His

Holiness. Jehovah was the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. All the laws of the old economy were based on the fact of the divine holiness. All the rites performed were open bulletins to the people of the awful holiness of the God they worshipped. On the very make of the tabernacle, on its covering, on its furniture, on its altars, was written in letters of burning flame, "Holiness to the Lord." Every vessel, every censer, every lamp was declared holy. Because God was holy the place was holy, the minister was holy, the altar was holy, the ark was holy, the oracle was holy—it was a sanctuary. "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord of Hosts, forever."

We see this in the etymology of the word temple. The word is a suggestive word. It has a rather striking history. It is derived from the Greek root, *temno*, to cut. What, one might ask, has cutting to do with a temple? Well, a good deal. If one will take the trouble to travel back into the early history of primitive man, one of the first persons he will meet will be a priest. He will perhaps be going out to measure off a part of a field with a tape-line. After measuring it, he takes his pickaxe and loosens the soil. That is to say, he cuts a strip all around, and separates it from the rest and calls it sacred ground; he cuts it off from common

usage. Then he steps inside the line and begins to build an altar. Gradually an altar rises, but still he calls the place temple—not a building mark; simply the ground cut off, just an open field with an altar on it! In course of time walls rise round about the field to shut out the heat and the damp and the cold, but still the old name is retained—temple—part cut off. To-day temple means building. But it did not originally mean a building. Yonder corner is called a temple, not because there is a building on it, but because the ground has been detached and devoted to a holy purpose.

No doubt some one will call this superstition, but is it superstition to insist that there are some things in life that are sacred? This is the fundamental message of the Church. Jesus never said that all places were sacred or that all things were sacred, but He did say that some places were and that some things were. The home of your childhood is not like every other house to you; the grave of your mother, the scene of your sorrow, the stage of your triumph—these are not common spots. Every true man has his elect nook. Poor is one's home if there be not some quiet corner in it fronting Jerusalem. I have noticed that the man who begins by saying that all places are sacred usually ends by saying that no place is sacred. Make every day Sunday and soon you will have no Sunday. It is worth

remembering that the divinest life in history had special seasons—went to church, read the Scriptures, retired for prayer, practised the presence of God.

Dr. Fosdick in one of his books says: “ If a man does not start by feeling that something is sacred he will never feel that anything is sacrilegious. That temple on Zion where prayers had been offered and sins had been forgiven and the glory of the Lord had been revealed—that and all things associated with it were in this Jew’s eyes sacred. You may call it very old-fashioned and superstitious thus to think of a piece of ground as holy, but I would rather be that ancient Jew and think a piece of ground holy than be as some modern folks on whose lives we have to look, who seem to think that nothing in life is holy at all. All that is lofty and beautiful, excellent and august in human life has come from men and women who have been sure that at the heart of life is something that ought never to be violated. If Joseph resists the solicitations of impurity in Egypt it is because he thinks that honour is sacred. If the three hundred at Thermopylæ withstand with remarkable courage the onslaught of many foes it is because they think that loyalty is sacred. If John Huss at Constance goes to the stake rather than lie it is because he thinks that truth is sacred. All that is beautiful in human life is associated with the

consciousness in the hearts of men that there is something here that must not be desecrated. You may go into any country in any generation and you will find religion saying about something, "This is holy." To be sure, it may be only a painted stick or a hideous idol or an altar running with the blood of sacrifice, but of something religion has always said, "This is holy." Why is it that we shrink in horror from the type of character now revealed in this recrudescence of banditry in New York City; is not the reason this: that men show us lives in which they do not seem to find anything holy at all? Human life itself is not holy; they take it for a song. Truth is not holy; they lie with ease. Friendship is not holy; they betray their own without a qualm; nowhere in their lives a spot where they hear a voice, "The place whereon thou standest—holy ground." Think what it means to range through the whole expanse of your experience and not find a single place before which you stand in reverence, concerning which you think it ought not to be desecrated! There is no lower abyss possible to character than the loss of all sense of sacredness in life."

There never was a time in the history of our country when the Church of the living God was such a crying need as to-day, if for no other reason for this, that the place is a symbol of sacredness, a sanctuary, a hallowed spot from which

the message of the Divine holiness is proclaimed. What the world needs to-day as never before is devoutness. We have lost the old prophetic sense of awe. The sin of the age is sacrilege. The trouble with our time is profanity. Vulgarity and loudness and godlessness are written large all over our national life. Everywhere there is the worship of the sensual and the sexual. There is disregard of the sacredness of marriage, there is a rejection of Christian principles in business, in politics, in diplomacy, in international statesmanship. If we look at what Emerson calls "the solid angularity of facts" we see decadence on every side. Our whole system of education is fast approaching paganism. Instance the Press! Most of our newspapers, even the best ones, will publish whole pages of sickening details about a murder or a scandal, while they can hardly find half a column of space for a single paragraph concerning the upper heights of really noble thought. A traveller was telling us recently of returning from Europe on a ship that sailed under the American flag. She belonged to our own government. In the hold of the ship were several hundred bodies of dead soldiers. On Sunday morning a religious service was held in the cabin conducted by the captain. "Hardly was the benediction pronounced before there was a rush, and the dancing began." The grand draped ocean liner, with

flags half mast, and slowly ploughing her way on her funeral march, echoed to the rattle of brass bands and jazz music.

“The cymbals crash and the dancers walk,
With long silk stockings and arms of chalk,
Butterfly skirts and white breasts bare
And the shadows of dead men watching 'em there.”

There are many perils confronting our country to-day. We have idolatry and superstition and mammon-worship and vulgar luxury and drunkenness and licentiousness and disregard for law and human life. In the midst of these evils “the Church seems terribly circumscribed, hopelessly outnumbered, frequently overpowered, always outgeneralled.” But the violent perils are not our greatest dangers. The waves that beat against the ship are sometimes not as dangerous as the worms. There are many who feel that our greatest foes are sly, silent, submarine, under water.

A book has just issued from the press entitled “Tales of the Jazz Age.” The title is significant. Surely if ever we need to-day some shrines, holy places where we drop the voice and cultivate the softer tones. The hour of worship is a protest against the life that is sordid. In these days of revolution and unrest do we not need some hints of the unseen? The Church stands like a pillar amid the swirling surges of our turbulent American life to bear witness to

the things that are sacred—love, faith, hope, marriage, justice, courage, truth, immortality, prayer. The age is mad. What is going to stem its madness? The aim of the Church is to call us back to soberness and sanity. Has not the time come when every lover of his country should say, “ I go to church because I love America ”?

So many ways to spend one's money;
So many courses to eat and drink;
So many irons in life's hot furnace;
So little time to think.

So many places to go for pleasure;
Hurrying, rushing at breakneck speed;
Cabarets, dance-halls, theatres, functions;
So little time to read.

So many outings to make on Sundays—
The national sporting gala-day;
Golfing, autoing, week-end visiting;
So little time to pray.

What of the Church in all this ferment?
What of our country, its drift, its goal?
What speaketh Wisdom to all this madness?
Husks to the nation's soul.

XVI

THE SKYSCRAPER AND THE HOME



HAVING lived for the past ten years in an apartment, and now being happily domiciled in a home, I am writing these words with a strange feeling of ownership! Never during our ten years' city experience were we able to think of the skyscraper we tenanted as a house. It always impressed us as a sort of public institution, and as for thinking of it as a home, that idea was never seriously entertained. We did not live in it. We just stayed in it. Nobody any more thinks of New York as a place to live in; it is a place to go and visit for a few weeks or months, going the rounds of the theatres and music halls; perhaps a place to go and preach to the sinners, maybe just a great wilderness of forests and financiers where one can be found any day from nine in the morning till five in the afternoon hunting game, and then to hurry away from as summarily as possible.

But now I am no longer an urban; I'm a suburban. And I live in a house, in a home be it noted, and there are many new experiences. It

is like living one's life over again. The sensation of going up and down-stairs for instance seems strangely unfamiliar. After ten years of flat monotony one almost forgets that there are such things as stairs. Milne in one of his essays tells of moving into his new home and what a fascination the stairs had for him. For a full decade it was "getting up for breakfast, now it is coming down." A few summers ago when our youngest was labouring hard trying to get the use of his limbs, we took him visiting. And the thing that interested us most during our visit was in observing how the little codger's greatest delight was in negotiating the stairs. He had never seen stairs before, and they were an untiring source of interest. Up and down he would pull himself, with the aid of the bannister, from morning to night. And in this I cannot help noting how like a child I am again. I find myself going up and down just for the novelty of the adventure, or perhaps to be sure that the old body is functioning. It seems to act as a recall of one's childhood. And what a muscle builder it is! For the past decade we were shot up to our little nest on the tenth floor in a lift and then down again, along with a lot of other cliff dwellers. I never realized that my legs were getting tottery until one day at Wykagyl when scaling that mountain familiar to golfers on the way to the eighteenth green. "Why," I

panted to my partner, "I believe my legs are giving out." "Come and buy a house in the country like me," he made answer; "it won't be long till New Yorkers have no legs."

Then think of having one's own fireplace, a real one too, none of your imitation gas arrangements, but a big genuine stone fireplace with a real chimney where great pine logs without any holes in them crackle and blaze, and warm our toes and stir our reveries and cheer our hearts. Then think of being able to strum away at the piano to one's heart's melodious content, and just when one feels like it, without his conscience pricking him that possibly he may be disturbing his next door neighbour on the other side of the plaster. This very morning indeed, the first thing that caught my eye in the *Times* was the story of one of New York's 400 being summoned to the police court to answer a charge of conducting a disorderly apartment. It seems that one Sunday night she had had a musicale during which the orchestra disturbed the tenant on the floor below. And indeed one can quite understand the feelings of this poor tormented sufferer. Because for years I have tried to do a little after dinner light reading myself, when the more serious worries of the day were over. So I picked me out a room remote (if one can call anything in an apartment remote), and therein moved my morris-chair and my writing

table and some magazines. No sooner done than my neighbour on the other side of the wall pushed her piano alongside of my writing desk, and her little girl started taking music lessons. And as luck, or something worse, would have it, her hours for practice coincided exactly with my hours for light reading and I had a free entertainment every evening. And to make matters still more interesting, the gentleman who lived next door to us on the other side of our cliff dwelling did not seem to live on the most affectionate terms with his wife; or perhaps it was the other way, for these were the days before the 18th Amendment and the poor unfortunate had an over-fondness for something stronger than apollinaris, and the screams she would utter and the anathemas she would invoke would not infrequently give us another free entertainment.

I cannot say with my humorous friend who filed a complaint that the tenant on the skyward side of his abode was a pupil of Pavlowa, as the plastered ceiling here and there bore unwelcome evidence. For our excellent and exalted neighbours were most peaceful and desirable and charming folk. The only accusation I have against them is another grievance that Milne mentions, viz., that sometimes in taking a bath they would forget the faucet. It seems the good wife was afflicted with insomnia, for which her physician, so I was subsequently informed, had

prescribed a hot salt bath on retiring. So she would turn on the bath in plenty of time and then go off and prepare herself for the treatment, occasionally overlooking the running solution, and so giving us the benefit of the overdose. So that when all the evidence is in, and I look back soberly and serenely on my ten years' stay in the great city's crowded lodgings, I feel a little like another discontent who once remarked to me in her country retreat, "I don't see why these places should be called Apartments; I think a much better name would be Togetherments."

But now I live in a house of my own by the side of the hill and we are spared all this free performance. Of course I'm a commuter and I have quite a trip each day, but then I do not have to hold on to a strap, crushed in with hundreds of other poor sufferers of civilization and stupidity on their tired way home. I do not have to watch my step and worm myself into a dirty germ-laden subterranean conveyance, or be jammed in unceremoniously by a guard as if one were mixed up in a football scrimmage. I am not forced to undergo the immoral experience of being squeezed like a human sardine in a sealed can. I can always have my seat, and I can always have my newspaper. No sooner inside the gates than I have an easy feeling of relief that all ducking and dodging for one day more are over. I get away from the crowd and

the crush and the concrete and the city of dreadful pleasures, and then when I arrive I can always have my quiet.

For that is one thing that no mortal must ever expect in New York. It is the noisiest place on the map. The air is rent with harshness, the night is hideous with racket and deafening shrieks. Peddlers, newsboys, old clothes men, fruit vendors still cry their wares. Up and down our concourse I have counted in fifteen minutes 500 vehicles of every size and shape and character and colour. As a police officer said to us recently: "Look down that Avenue; it looks as if cars just cost a nickel." On one side was the elevated, on the other was a double surface line, while down below the automobiles were parked in rows with their honks of hooting horns. It was like trying to sleep in a public garage.

But now we have the peace of the hills. From the station we climb up through a row of silver beeches and fine old walnuts, clambering part way over rocks that crop out through the soil, up to our cozy cedar knoll, from which one can gaze over a long line of wooded country. We can sit in our sun parlour and look out across the meadow and the burn and watch the sun go down. We welcome the primroses and daffodils just arriving on the heels of winter. We can linger and count the stars as they come timidly out. Of course our pipes burst and our water

overflows too sometimes, and occasionally we forget to put the coal on, and every now and then we have to dig out our goloshes and our mittens and go forth and shovel some of our way to Grand Central. But then think of the sunsets. What are snow-banks compared with sunsets! Why, I haven't seen a sunset in the city for years. My sun always went down behind a skyscraper.

I must not forget to mention one more trouble about living on the tenth floor. You never know how to dress in the morning. You cannot step out on the veranda and see how cold it is. You never know how strong the wind is blowing or how fiercely the rain is beating. Not until you are four blocks away do you decide, this overcoat is too light and I must hie me back and get my fur; or it's too heavy, I must retrace my steps and get summer weight. Better have rubbers too. Of course you are always forgetting the umbrella. And anyway, as another friend remarked, "I'm tired looking down on people; I'd rather see them on the level."

There is quite a fad in New York to-day in regard to buying one's own apartment. That has always seemed a bit ethereal. A home in the air seems somewhat intangible. "When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies" may be good theology but I must confess to a little suspicion as to its economic wisdom. And

even its theology is questionable. The apartment is not favourable to the religious life. Religion does not seem to thrive in the atmosphere of skyscrapers; it needs homes. Churches only prosper where there are homes. I haven't much real estate where I am, it is true, but then it's real and it's estate and it's on rock, and best of all I insist, it's home. For we never called our corner in the clouds home. The question was never asked, What time will you be home this evening? It was always, "What time will you be up?" or "What time will you be in?" or "What time will you be here?" It was "up" or "in" or "here," never home. When Herbert Spencer began to write his great system of ethics, a critic said of it that it reminded him of the architect that Gulliver met in his travels who had contrived a new method to erect houses by beginning with the roof and working down. And that is a good deal how buying an apartment seems. It looks a little like laying a foundation for a habitation by starting with the rafters or the gable end. The wiser way would seem to be to break ground with terra firma and commence with granite and drill and concrete, and so on to cellar and basement and tenth floor. There is a tendency to-day to swing away from the substantial. De Quincy said of Coleridge: "He lives in the sky; he wants better bread than can be made with wheat." As for myself, I prefer

to keep firm hold of the definite and the tangible. I prefer wheat, flour, facts, figures, foundation, iron, steel, brick, marble, real estate. In theology I like to dismiss speculation as far as possible. I am not much inclined even to mysticism. I favour history, testimony, witnesses, signatures, evidence, credentials, documents—in a word chapter and verse. Otherwise like Ixion we are embracing a cloud.

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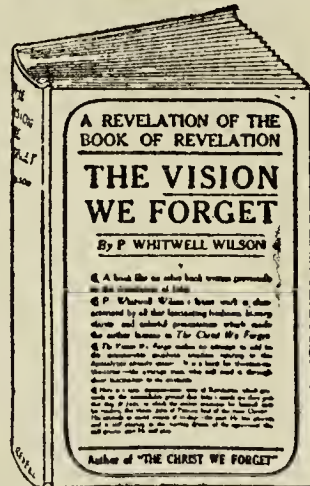
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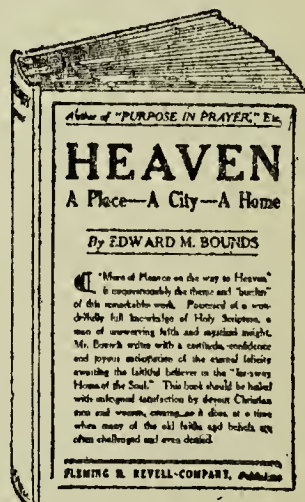
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